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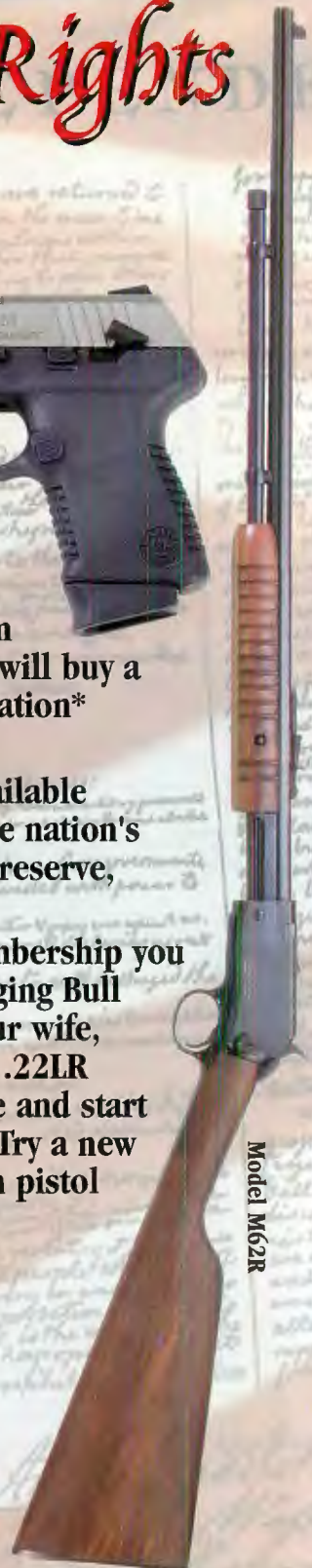
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OCTOBER 2000 ✂ VOL. 25 NO. 10



Peter G. Kokalis

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Former Belgian army operator, Peter C. van Collem, test-fires the new U.S.-made DSA FAL-type rifle patterned after the Austrian SIG 58. See story, page 44.

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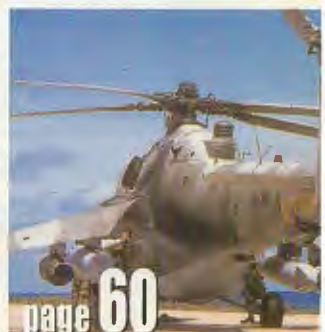
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COMMAND GUIDANCE

by Don Feder

Pentagon Losing The Recruiting War

Tom Cruise, move over. The military has its own mission impossible: recruiting and keeping key personnel.

After failing 7,000 short of its recruitment goal last year (despite dangling lavish sign-up bonuses), the Army is now offering to help enlistees find civilian jobs when their tour of duty ends.

For the last two years, 35 percent of those it did recruit failed to complete their initial enlistment — an historic high.

Young officers are stampeding for the exit door. In 1988, 6.4% of Army captains did not re-enlist. In each of the past three years, 10 percent left. Last year, only 35 percent of junior officers said they intend to make the Army a career, compared to 52 percent in 1990.

To understand why, the Army recently surveyed 760 officers enrolled in its Command and General Staff College, at Fort Leavenworth. In the words of one instructor, "Virtually every officer was negative."

Lack of confidence in the brass was reflected in the comment. "Senior leaders will throw subordinates under the bus in a heartbeat to protect or advance their career."

Junior officers dislike the shift to peace-keeping operations — serving as nannies to squabbling Third World clans.

But this is part of a more pervasive problem. An instructor who saw the survey forms commented "Because of gender integration and homosexuals in the military, there is a feeling that being a soldier is less macho, less soldier.... A lot of it has to do with the perception, right or wrong, that the Army has turned into a politically correct social organization."

West Point, once the temple of the warrior ethic, now looks more like a sensitivity training session. In April, a lecture by a World War II combat veteran was canceled because some cadets were offended by the vet's earlier objections to women in combat.

In 1997, Col. James Hallums, a much-decorated Vietnam veteran, was relieved of his position as head of the Academy's leadership program for criticizing the touchy-feely ethos reigning among faculty. Women complained

that Hallums stressed his combat experience in a way that made them feel excluded.

The Army doesn't want anyone to feel excluded ("Are you comfortable with firing that mortar?"), as Stephanie Gutmann's new book, *The Kinder, Gentler Military*, elucidates.

Gutmann, who spent two years writing her book, visited bases in seven states, observed training and talked to personnel (mostly off the record).

Gutmann writes recruits "no longer do a required number of push-ups to a count, the drill sergeant exercises along with them as a sort of role model and they drop out when they feel like it."

In the book, a colonel rationalizes easier physical tests for women as "equal points for equal effort." Before she does a rope-swing, a timid recruit asks her drill instructor, "Will you catch me?" More capable men and women wonder if they're in basic training or on the jungle cruise at Disney World.

Call it the draft-dodger's revenge. Clinton has pushed an emasculated military with a vengeance, removing exemptions for women from 250,000 close-to-combat positions. He's turned the military over to bureaucrats who despise everything it once represented.

The armed services will never be able to meet the economic incentives of the private sector. Once, they compensated with psychic rewards. Foremost among these was the feeling, assiduously cultivated in the ranks, that soldiers were doing something tough and dangerous of which few were capable.

Now, the warrior culture is dying. Feminists, sensitivity trainers, those who mistake the military for an equal opportunity employer and generals who'll tell politicians anything to earn their next star are tugging on the life supports.

National security will be the ultimate casualty. Try fighting the next war with troops who are used to calling a "time-out" when they're stressed.

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SOLDIER OF FORTUNE (USPS 525-810, ISSN 0145-6784), October 2000, Volume 25, Number 10, is published monthly by SOLDIER OF FORTUNE Inc., 5735 Arapahoe Ave., Suite A-5, Boulder, CO 80303-1340. Periodicals Postage is paid at Boulder, CO and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to SOLDIER OF FORTUNE, Subscription Department, POB 348, Mt Morris, IL 61054-0348 or call 1-800-877-5207. U.S. and APO-FPO subscription rate for twelve monthly issues \$29.95. Canada add \$10.00/yr. additional postage (includes GST tax registration business number: 12847 6249 RT). All other countries add \$21.00 U.S. FUNDS ONLY. Single Issue Price — U.S.: \$4.99; United Kingdom: £2.60; Canada: \$5.99. PRINTED IN THE USA.

CONTRIBUTORS: Manuscripts, photographs or drawings are submitted at the contributor's own risk. Material should be mailed to Articles Editor, SOLDIER OF FORTUNE, 5735 Arapahoe Ave., Suite A-5, Boulder, CO 80303-1340, and cannot be returned unless accompanied by sufficient postage. Any material accepted is subject to such revision as is necessary to meet the editorial requirements of SOF. All manuscripts must be typed double-spaced. All photographs must be credited and be accurately identified. Payment will be made at rates current at time of publication. Editorial office phone number is 303-449-3750.

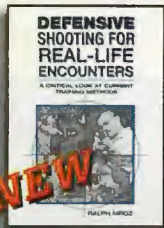
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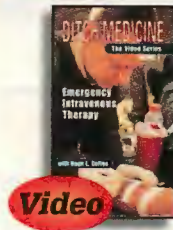
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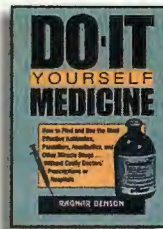
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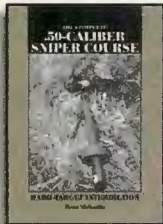
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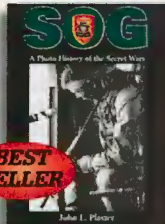
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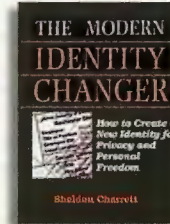
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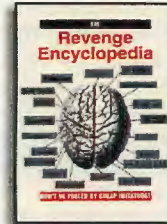
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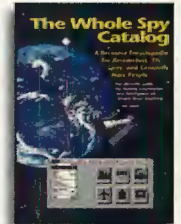
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Hanoi Jane And The Big O

With the stroke of a pen or the click of a mouse, Oprah Winfrey has created an entire new concept for warships: *antiaircraft carriers*. But she apparently owes Jane Fonda the credit. In an extensive interview in the July-August issue of *O* magazine, Winfrey quotes Fonda, "I will go to my grave regretting the photo of me in an antiaircraft carrier, looking like I was shooting at American planes." Yep. And Oprah put her name on that interview.

The infamous 1972 photo snapped near Hanoi showed Fonda seated behind the sights of an antiaircraft gun, as cameras whirled and clicked and microphones absorbed her wisdom (said photo available at <http://vikingphoenix.com/>).

At the time of Fonda's visit to Hanoi, North Vietnamese communists were systematically starving, beating, and torturing American prisoners of war, but between photo ops American citizen "Hanoi Jane" Fonda went on Radio Hanoi and broadcast to G.I.s in the south, telling them their commanders were war criminals and praising her heroic hosts. Civilian POW Michael Bengé agreed to meet with Fonda so he could tell her of the brutal treatment but, as he wrote, "because of this, I spent three days on a rocky floor on my knees with outstretched arms with a piece of steel rebar placed on my hands, and beaten with a bamboo cane every time my arms dipped. Jane Fonda had the audacity to say that the POWs were lying about our torture and treatment."

As *Boston Globe* columnist Jeff Jacoby noted in June 1999 when



HIMMY

Retirees are in demand as educators, as Old Soldiers can have a lot to teach. So do the Old Soldiers at the Heartland Museum of Military Vehicles in Lexington, Nebraska, such as this 50-year-old M2 White half-track. Some 10 years ago the dedicated quartet Terry Lauby, Dave Smith, Chris Larsen and Al Martin started acquiring and restoring historical military vehicles, which now comprise several dozen, from WWII Jeeps, weasels and ambulances, to a Huey, M60 tank and Bradley prototype and everything in between. A non-profit, the Heartland Museum seeks tax-deductible donations of restorable vehicles, ancillary equipment — and cash for a building at the I-80 interchange that will house the collection. Any time you are within driving distance of Lexington, check them out at 606 Heartland Road; call Terry at 308-325-0041 if you have items or funds to contribute, or have a line on a restorable vehicle.

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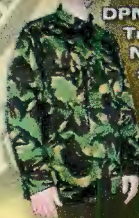
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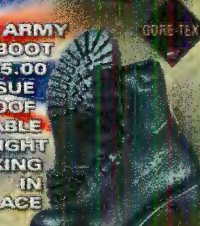


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I'm a former Navy SEAL (the US Navy's Elite Commandos) and in 1987 we were introduced to one Jerry Lee Peterson. This guy came to us from some, let's just say, 'highly credible' sources within our government. At the time the SEAL's were searching to standardize the way they taught hand-to-hand fighting to the hard charging SEAL combat platoons. We faced the same problems you face today; we didn't have twenty years to become effective fighters. Our guys needed a program, which got them to fight with or without weapons and guaranteed they could not be defeated, no matter what the attacker knew about fighting. It needed to be quickly learned and easily retained, based on natural body movement and had to work regardless of size or strength.

Needless to say EVERY martial art and fighting system we tested (and we tested them all: Karate, Kung Fu, JKD, Jui Jitsu, Sambo...) all failed the test. They either took way to long to learn, could not handle modern weapons, failed against multiple attackers or required excessive athletic coordination. More importantly these 'arts' or 'sports' were all DEFENSIVE in nature, a term we didn't know was a problem... until we met Jerry.

This guy comes in and takes 14 SEALs with very little hand-to-hand experience and announces after a few hours of training them we could put his guys up against the most highly experienced fighting gurus of the SEAL Teams. I mean some of these 'gurus' had been trained practically from birth in the martial arts. These dudes were feared within the tight community of the SEALs and anyone who has spent anytime around the "Teams" knows SEAL's fear next to nothing. But Peterson insisted and the demo went on; to the amazement of all in attendance the Peterson-trained SEAL operator DESTROYED each and every of the 'gurus' quickly and effectively. Not only that, these guys easily adapted whether the attackers used fists, kicks, grapples, chokes or weapons... it just didn't matter. Jerry's fighters seemed to just focus on taking out

the attacker (more about this in the FREE report). And you too can be just like the Peterson-trained SEAL commandos, when you armed with the knowledge of his AMAZINGLY effective yet simple to learn fighting system (more on that later).

The One True Ultimate Fighting System

So who is this Jerry Peterson dude and what can his revolutionary fighting system do for YOU? Only give you the confidence to never waste another day of your life fearing another man. Ya see this system of his wasn't developed by some ancient 'grandmaster' with some mystical (or should I say questionable) background. Nor was it something that was watered down into some 'ultimate competition' that pretends to be real yet has rules and a ref. No this system was developed in the harsh jungle combat of the Vietnam War. That's where a 19-year-old soldier was literally dropped into a horrific fire-fight after only his 3rd day 'in country' (as they say) and what did he do? He felt the paralyzing fear of imminent death taking hold of him...why? Because the 'combat training' he had received failed him... he was waiting for someone, anyone to tell him what to do, to lead him, yet no one did. So if he was going to survive this, it was up to him and guess what he did? He got mad, I mean hellfire and brimstone MAD, and right then and there promised himself he would never wait for another man to tell him what to do. He then looked and found the enemy who pinned them down, CHARGED and took them out in one smooth action. That was the dawn of Special Combat Reactionary Systems (SCARS®).

You Now Live The Fearless Life With The Offensive Mindset™

That 19-year-old kid was Jerry Lee Peterson. He went on to serve 2 tours as a 'pointman' with 173rd Airborne Charlie Company. That unit is credited by historians as seeing some of the MOST fierce combat of that war and Peterson arguably held the most dangerous job at 'point'. It was in those jungles that he saw what a defensive mindset did to men, how it caused them to freeze and die. He survived numerous overrun situations (where the enemy outnumbered and actually overruns you) requiring hand-to-hand and hand-to-weapon killing. This was due to the revelation of what he was later to call the Offensive Mindset. The ability not to worry or fear what your enemy may do to you and only focus on what you are going to do to him.

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you learn in martial arts or 'sportfighting' may get you killed. And for those of you who don't think they have time to learn to live a fearless life I'm here to tell you can, IN A FEW SHORT HOURS, completely change the way you view the world and never fear any man from that day on.

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Fonda was to receive an AAUW "speaking out for justice" award, "Jane Fonda was 34 in 1972. Her decision to abet the totalitarians who were engaged in killing her fellow Americans was not an adolescent whim. It was an adult choice, and it was beneath contempt. And now she is to be honored for 'speaking out for justice?' What can the American Association of University Women be thinking?"

— Richard Rongstad

Hanoi Jane & The Little People

Passed along via Bill Craig were these notes from his USMC buddy Bob Kielhofer:

I was chief of staff to the Confederate general who was overall commander of the 6,000 troops in the movie *Gettysburg*. As actors, we volunteered to TNT which was making the movie, receiving a one-time payment of \$25 for travel and food on site. There were two incidents involving Hanoi Jane, the first on the day Ted Turner made his cameo appearance (as the white-haired officer who dies climbing over the fence in a charge).

I had brought a battalion, about 700 men, up on a road in the hot sun to await the set-up of cameras. HJ and Ted arrived in a helicopter for the take. HJ walked to the center of the battalion to see the troops, and accept the adulation she

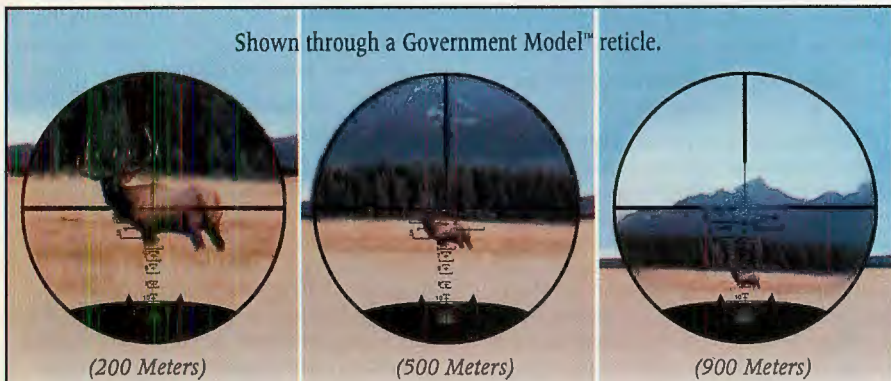
expected her hubby's employees would give her. Most of the troops present were North Carolinians, many from Ft. Bragg. The colonel commanding the battalion reported to me and informed me his troops were nonplussed by HJ's presence and asked my permission to make a troop movement to ease their feelings. What happened, I will never forget.

He called his men to attention. HJ, seeing the activity, smiled in anticipation of some show for her benefit, and walked to the front of the rightmost company. The colonel continued his orders and commanded the company in front of which she stood, "B Company! To the rear! By the right, about-face! Stand at ease" One hundred men pivoted and gave her their backs. Taking the action for what it was, HJ beat a hasty retreat down the line toward the helicopter. The colonel followed her progress down the battalion with the same disrespectful salute, reversing each company just as she reached the front of the company. Ten minutes later the chopper left and we saw her no more that day.

I gave the colonel a written commendation, mentioned in the next day's orders, for his innovation, extra rest for his battalion, and first place in the marching order ...

Later, one of my sergeants, a former medic in Vietnam, received a commendation from the County and National Park Service for his medical services during the filming. Ted Turner also shook his hand ceremoniously, and gave him a large check in thanks and in front of the throng presented HJ to the proud Confederate. She extended her hand to the sergeant, who jerked his hand away as if burned, putting it behind himself, and into the microphones said, "I mean no disrespect to you, Mr. Turner, but I will NOT shake the hand of a traitor."

Hope you all liked the movie.



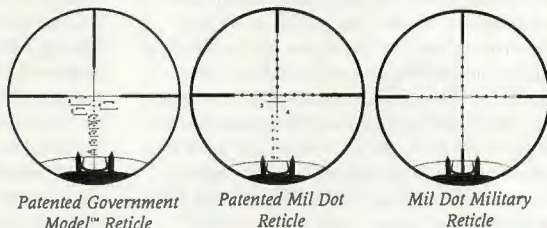
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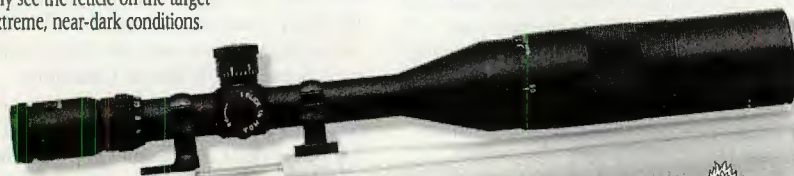


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Ooops Ops!

The photos of Pat Buchanan, Ross Perot and Jesse Ventura ("Two's Company, Three's A Crowd," page 69, August 2000 *SOF*), should have been credited to AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS. We regret this omission.

The Patriot Gun Flap

Hollywood, the city of commercialized raw sex and senseless bloodletting, sucked in its breath over the scene in Mel Gibson's *The Patriot* where lead character, Benjamin Martin, arms his 10- and 13-year old sons with muskets and goes out to ambush the Redcoats. Young boys with guns? Oh, horrors! After Columbine, no less!

Noted Matthew Robinson, of the Claremont Institute, "We live in a remarkable time when people cannot tell the difference between fighting to defend one's rights and killing for thrills. The very idea of patriotism is suspect, at least in the eyes

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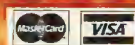
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of critics, academics and the press.”

Air Commando Hurlburt Homecoming 2000

October 5-9 will see members and spouses of the Air Commando Association meet for the ACA Millennium Reunion Weekend at Ft. Walton Beach, Florida. All members in good standing are invited to attend and bring their spouse, guests or significant other for a weekend filled with activities, seminars, social events and other worthwhile diversions such as a fly-in of old warbirds, beach parties, day trips, golf, banquets, dancing — even a story-telling competition.

Several other fraternal organizations will be holding their reunions at Hurlburt at the same time: Expect to rekindle many former friendships.

By the time this issue of *SOF* hits the streets, time will be getting short to accomplish your registration for this event, so we suggest you contact Rip Kirby, ACA VP, via phone at 850-581-0099, or via fax at 850-862-7133, ASAP.

Women's Hunting Online

Having trouble getting your rib or significant other to go hunting with you? Well, it's probably because she suspects that — sexist pig that you are — you really only want her to be camp cook. Ahah! We have a plan for you: Invite her to check out Women's Hunting Online on the web at <http://womenshunting.rivals.com>. Editor Kathy Etling has scheduled stories on how-to, where-to, adventure, wildlife biology and animal behavior, hunting ethics, fiction and humor. They soon will be featuring guns, bows, ammo, gear, outfitters and more. And the legislative fronts (currently, there is an excellent piece regarding what rights the founding fathers referred to in the Second Amendment, entitled, "Who Is the Militia?")

This new women's site is a very worthwhile enterprise. Now, if we can just get her to sneak in some good camp recipes ...



Virtual Gun Show

Now, through the Internet, GunShowAuction.com brings a virtual gun show right to your house. The auction format has become very popular with web shoppers, and GunShowAuction.com is making it easy to play with an easy-to-use interface with an auto picture upload, giving the seller and buyer a much better shot at being happy with the transaction.

GunShowAuction.com also offers a free personal web page to every user, called "just me," which is a venue where collectors can tell others about their hobbies and what they collect or have to offer. Images can be linked to this page. There are links on GunShowAuction.com's homepage to governmental agencies to keep abreast of existing regulations, to manufacturers, etc.

Categories on GunShowAuction.com include antique, curio,

Continued on page 14

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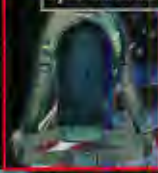
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Veterans.com

A new not-for-profit web site sponsored by the History Channel has been launched, and to celebrate its inauguration History Channel.com is donating computers and cable modem Internet access to veteran's centers around the country, in partnership with local cable affiliates.

A hallmark feature of Veterans.com is its "veterans locator" database that allows visitors to search for veterans by name, nickname, home town or service background.

The site also has eyewitness war stories and a profile of the "veteran of the month" nominated by site visitors. There are also many links to a wide range of military services and veterans organizations.

Peter Arnett's Great Comeback

From somewhere near the bottom of the dustbin of history, disgraced journalist Peter Arnett is clawing his way back. On 26 June, Arnett was the featured guest on all 5 kilowatts of power on KSUB in Cedar City, Utah. Sure enough, a caller skewered Arnett on Ted Turner's sorry CNN "Tailwind" debacle, and sure enough, Arnett tried to wriggle free, taking no blame for the program that launched a wave of lawsuits by slandered veterans. — Richard Rongstad

Aussie AUG Angst

In the September issue of Bulletin Board we reported that the 4th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment was to be issued new M4 carbines. From the Brisbane *Sunday Mail* comes the rest of the story:

Long-criticized by the troops, the Australian license-built Steyr rifles have come under fire recently because of more than 65 accidental discharges experienced during Aussie ops in East Timor. The 4RAR asked for the M4 simply because they did not consider the AUG up to the standard required for commando operations.

Not Lonely At The Top

According to a recent census, one in three Australian troops is an officer or senior NCO. Major General Peter Dunn characterized the figures as alarming, and has launched an immediate review of officer levels. The census showed that the proportion of commissioned officers rose from 19% to 23%, and senior NCOs has remained steady at 10%. According to the Australian Defence Association, lower enlisted ranks have been reduced by 12% in recent draw-downs, but officers only 2%.

Roy P. Benavidez Foundation

A project has been launched in Cuero, Texas, to build a life-size memorial statue to honor Roy P. Benavidez, MOH, who recently passed away. A true hero, a modest gentleman and a friend of SOF, Benavidez will long be remembered by those who were privileged to know him, and a memorial will ensure those who did not know him will also be able to learn from his heroic example.

An account has been established to hold contributed funds for this memorial. Donations may be sent to the Roy P. Benavidez Memorial Project, Dept. SOF, First Capital Bank, 102 E. Main, Cuero, TX 77954-3719. A web site has been established for those desiring further information or updates on the project: www.roy-p-benavidez.com. Officials or organizations who wish to lend encouragement to this worthwhile memorial can contact Cuero mayor, the Honorable Buzz Edge, at 361-275-3476. ✕

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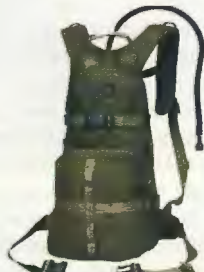
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I Was There

by Jeff Nelson

STEEL TIGER



The Steel Tiger. Just the sound of it made even the old-timers shudder. There was a little-known country in Southeast Asia that had an ominous reputation for danger and evil — Laos. The Ho Chi Minh Trail skirted along its border with South Vietnam, down which an average of 20,000 troops per month moved during 1969, the year I was there. Transporting the vast array of military equipment down the thousand-mile Trail were trucks, and civilians pushing bicycles — carrying up to 200 pounds of ammo, rifles, rocket-propelled grenades, mortars and the giant 122mm rockets, which impacted like the sledgehammer of God.

All this activity naturally gained the attention of the U.S. Command who used everything in its arsenal for the mission of shutting down the Trail. We struck at night using heavily armed C130s, lighting up trucks with infrared detectors then obliterating them with Gatling guns. We carpet-bombed at all hours with B52s — the mother of all nightmares for the NVA and Viet Cong. Fastmovers seeded the Trail with transmitters sensitive enough to pick up conversations among troops; the information then plugged into a computer to gain exact locations for air strikes. In due course, the enemy fortified the Trail accordingly, with fierce anti-aircraft artillery batteries hidden in jungles and mountaintop caves. Although Laos claimed neutral status, the border areas were distinct and notorious sanctuaries for the enemy, so not to go after the Trail would be tactical idiocy. So we did — Marine F4 drivers from Marine Air Group 13.

Since I arrived in-country, I had heard about the Steel Tiger and had seen the back of flight jackets with the conspicuous, snarling tiger surrounded on the borders of Laos by steel bars. If you ever had to eject or bail out over the Tiger your chances were slim to zip that you'd ever be seen again — alive or dead. The monster that consumed you would not necessarily be the Steel Tiger but soldiers of the North Vietnamese army, or perhaps Laotian rebels fighting with the NVA. But you prayed it would be the Tiger that got you because *he* might've been considerate and killed you quickly, unlike the communists who had something more terrifying in mind. For two thou-

"We would make only one pass each, drop all bombs — then get the hell out."

sand years — or longer — the Vietnamese had honed and practiced the most barbaric and agonizing methods of torture known to man. It was all chronicled in history: from the infamous "death of a thousand cuts," to death by disease and cruelty. In the Laotian bush, small groups of six to 10 men, operating alone under no one's close scrutiny, were free to put prisoners

through hell with no interference, or consequences. Starvation, exhaustion, confinement in small bamboo animal cages, exposure and torture motivated many a POW to pray to the God he had or the one he would surely find.

Our mission on one particular day was commanded by the group executive officer, Lieutenant Colonel Hartman, call sign "Sniper." He was one of those macho, cigar-smoking, arrogant types who thought he was indestructible. He carried the flak-suppression ordnance; four rocket pods consisting of 16 extremely accurate

5-inch "Zuni" rockets. At 2 miles out, you could put one through the windshield of a truck — on the driver's side! I would be on his wing carrying eight Zunis and six 500-pound bombs. My call sign was "Goose" and, as usual, Johnny "Cool" would be my backseater. In the number three spot was "Jersey" and in the number four, "Big Red" and his scope (spotter), each carrying 12 500-pounders. Our targets were a suspected truck park, ammo dump and troop concentration in an area of the Ho Chi Minh trail in northern Laos called the Mu Gia Pass. I had seen it once before and the panorama looked like the landscape of the moon, pockmarked with thousands of craters indicative of the numerous attacks on trucks, troop movements and anti-aircraft batteries. Rugged, treeless karst mountains rose up like huge stalagmites hundreds and thousands of feet from the valley floor.

A Forward Air Controller (or FAC), call sign "Raven" was assigned to our flight and usually flew an A4, a smaller and more maneuverable aircraft. The FAC knew the target area and could identify local landmarks and movement. He would fire a white phosphorous smoke rocket on the target and direct our flight according to that mark.

We made contact with him about 30 miles out and he gave us

Boeing photo

If you ever had to eject or bail out over the Tiger, your chances were slim to zip that you'd ever be seen again - alive or dead.

details of the target advising us there was significant activity the night before and to expect heavy anti-aircraft fire. We would make only one pass each, drop all bombs, then get the hell out. There was no sense in giving the gunners more than one shot at us.

About that time, Hartman had us down to the "roll in" altitude. He would guard me on my pass, flying above and to my rear. If a gun came up on either side, he could maneuver quickly to get the shot. Then we would protect numbers three and four as they made their assault. Raven fired in his first mark and said, "Hit the smoke!" I rolled the Phantom inverted, let the nose fall to 60-degrees below the horizon, leveled my wings and headed down the slide. Johnny called out the altitudes and airspeeds to me as the white plume of smoke became larger in my windscreen. I felt the ground and the mountains coming up at us as we screamed towards the valley floor at 500 knots. I was nearly at release altitude when tracers streaked across my nose. It was not hard to forget that for every tracer round I saw, there were five huge, lethal rounds between them. Not able to twist or duck, I continued straight to 7,000 feet, released my bombs and started a 5-G pull-up. Now I could light the afterburner and yank and bank out of range. Tracers flew by my canopy like dead-

ly fireflies. I felt my ass pucker as a shot of adrenaline hit my system.

"Jeeezus, I hate this," Cool remarked in a muffled voice as the G-force squeezed his body. "I thought becoming a Phantom radar jock would keep me out of harm's way! What the hell was I thinking?"

"I'm going to have to change your name, Mr. Cool," I said to rattle him and his whining tone.

"Yeah, OK, Goose, just do some of that pilot shit and get us out of here. I don't feel like walking home today!"

Sniper called out gun locations at the flights' nine- and one-o'clock positions and told number three to roll in. The Colonel started after the guns before I arrived back at our base altitude. They had him in cross-fire, but he pushed ahead, giving the flight time to unload their 500-pounders. Two rockets came off each side of his Phantom and exploded on one of the guns as two more opened up. Tracers crisscrossed around his aircraft so thick and fierce, it looked like the 4th of July. I was now in a position to help him but Sniper continued his dangerous duel with the guns. Operating on nerves alone, he again rolled in, his rockets screaming down and tracers shooting up for him. Suddenly his aircraft exploded into a huge fireball with pieces

falling out of the sky like a fiery waterfall. In an instant, he and Lieutenant Miller were gone — no chutes, no chance. Silence filled our ears. The rest of the flight safely released all its ordnance on the target with pinpoint accuracy and spectacular secondary explosions, safe now, due to the heroism of these two men. We thought of revenge, to strike back — a bad idea even if we'd have had any ordnance left.

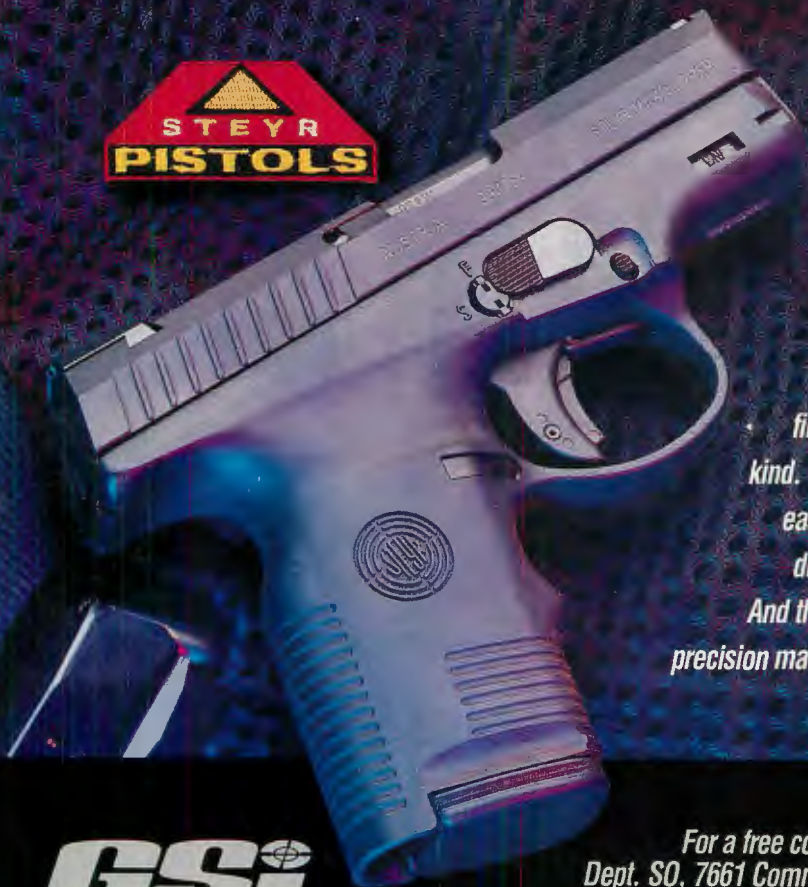
Colonel Hartman broke some of the primary rules of air-to-ground engagement: *Never* duel with anti-aircraft guns — *never* roll in at the same altitude or direction more than once — and *always* wait for help. His flight had completed the mission of destroying trucks, ammo, equipment and NVA soldiers, part of the larger effort and commitment we all swore to continue until we could walk away knowing that the people of South Vietnam could determine their own future.

The fact that great officers and pilots like Hartman and his scope, Miller, would die for that effort was the price all of us were willing to risk when we took the oath to serve.

They will not be forgotten.

This is Jeff Nelson's third I Was There piece. ✕

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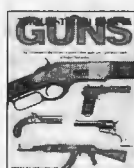
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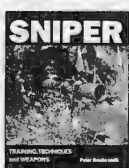
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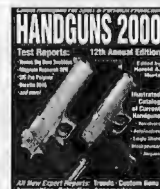
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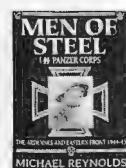
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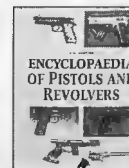
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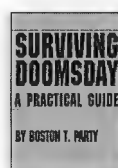
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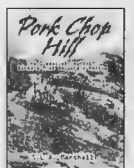
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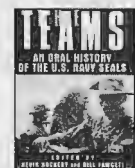
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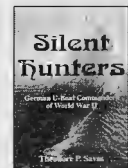
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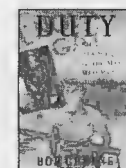
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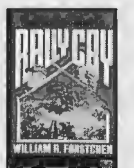
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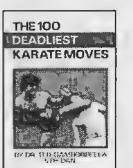
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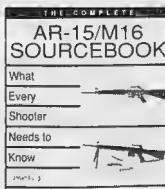
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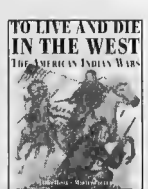
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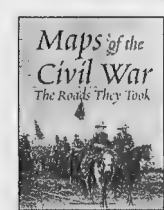
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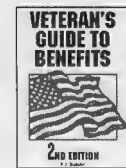
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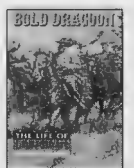
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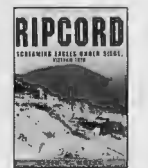
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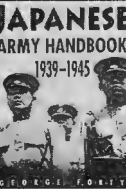
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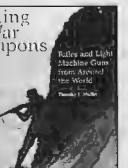
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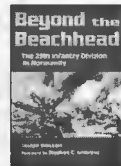
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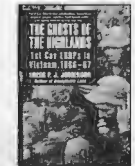
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ADVENTURE QUARTERMASTER

Emerson Mach-1 BTS

There probably never has been a better time for those who really appreciate top-quality folders. The cutting edge advances — pun intended — in materials technology and manufacturing technique are being fully exploited by those at the fore in the creative arena of cutlery design.

Thanks to these advances in technology, what a bladesmith can envision, he can create: And what he can create, he can now mass produce and market at a price historically quite less than older designs of lesser quality materials and manufacturing tolerance.

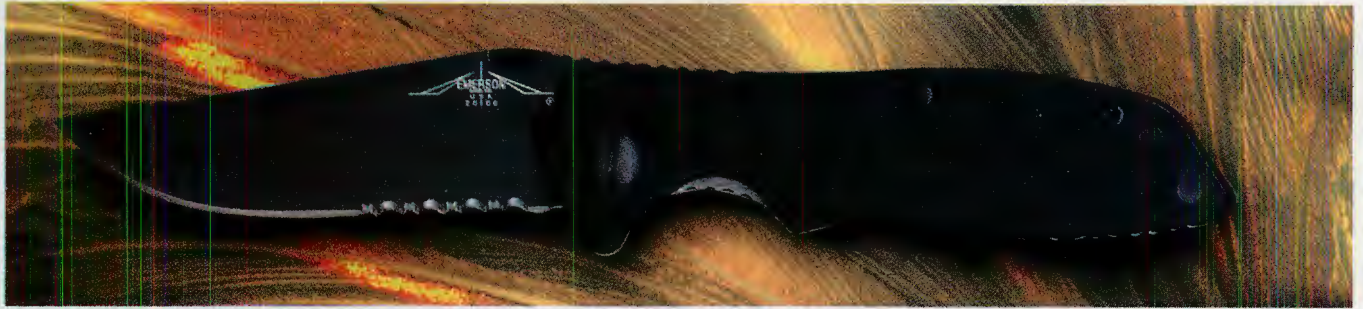
As has always been the case, those expanding the envelope are the creative, the bladesmiths who see the possibilities in new technology and translate the potential to successive new designs that will

better serve those who use a knife as a tool. Those who need not stake their life on their tools can do OK buying “cutlery” by the pound on the TV shopping channels. But G.I.s, cops, medics, aviators, spooks, divers and those who tread the wilderness or urban jungle in the line of duty have quickly sorted out the real bladesmiths from the merchants of chromed scrap-iron.

One of the creative ones who comes quickly to mind is Ernie Emerson, of Emerson Knives, Inc. Emerson started in the knife business as a designer, and although his design influence can be seen all over the folding-knife arena on knives that do not bear his name, his name has become well-established through the absolute top-quality knives he now makes in his own factory in Southern California.

Emerson’s new Mach-1 BTS is at hand, and an excellent knife

Continued on page 24



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"If I Can't Show You How To Immediately Escape From ANY Submission Hold – Even If You Are Pinned Down By A Skilled Attacker Twice Your Size – Then I Will Pay You \$10 From My Own Pocket... No Questions Asked!"

Ninety-percent of the streetfighters and punks out there now know how to put you down with nasty and painful submission holds, after studying the groundfighters who dominated the Ultimate Fighting Challenge.

What almost NO ONE in the world has figured out, however, is how to quickly ESCAPE from these "impossible" submission holds. It's a secret skill the professional groundfighters want to KEEP HIDDEN, but I will reveal it to you (for FREE if you choose)... and... if you aren't 110% convinced I'm right...

I will pay you \$10 just for checking it out for yourself!

I want you to do something that I would never ask *anyone* not on my "hot list" to even consider.

First, I want you to call my office, right now, and have the amazing "Escape From Impossible Holds" video I've set aside in your name rushed out to you. Next, I want you to watch it, and "get" the secret fighting information that's on it.

Then... I want you to go to your nearest dojo that teaches grappling... find the *biggest, meanest and most skilled groundfighter* there... and...

**Taunt Him Into Putting You
Into His Nastiest And Most Painful
Submission Hold!**

Preferably, this guy will be *at least a hundred pounds heavier* than you, strong enough to crush rocks in his bare hand, a black belt in Ju Jitsu or Judo... and be a little bit of an *asshole*. The kind of jerk who actually *enjoys* hurting people. (Think of thick-necked Tank Abbott from the *Ultimate Fighting Challenge*.) This way, when he has you in his most impossible-to-escape-from submis-

sion hold, there will be *no doubt* about what happens next.

Because, next, I want you to *use* what you've just learned to...

**Totally Humiliate Him By
Immediately Escaping,
Unharmed And Smiling,
From His "Impossible" Hold!**

However... do NOT, under any circumstances, use any of the "Ground Zero" *finishing moves* you also learn in this package. You don't want to *permanently destroy* this guy... you just want to prove a point to yourself. Those megabrutal "Ground Zero" moves (just thinking about them makes me a little afraid) are ONLY for when you're in a situation where your life... or the life of a loved one... is at risk. They're too deadly to use any other time. (You'll see exactly what I'm talking about when you get your tape package!)

Sounds almost too amazing to be true, doesn't it? (It's true, though.) I mean, the Brazilians, the Ju Jitsu experts, the Judo and the Russian Sambo artists have been absolutely **DOMINATING** the fighting world for almost ten years now by using



Known throughout the industry as the "Professor of Grappling", Mark Hatmaker has spent the last **NINE YEARS** studying the **BEST** groundfighters in the world... and picking apart their favorite holds until he discovered the *secret of escape* for every hold. Now his hard-won secrets to escaping "impossible holds" can be yours!

complex submission holds to *choke opponents out*. Once they get you into one of their holds, you're *completely helpless*... and... if you don't "tap out" immediately, you're *toast*. (In the street, you'll be unconscious or *dead*.)

Everyone has been trying for years to find a way **OUT** of these deadly submission holds. Boxers, Muay Thai experts, kung-fu black belts, JKD streetfighters, every martial artist in the book has *unsuccessfully* tried to steal the "secrets" of escape from the "groundfighting elite". It's humiliating for a guy, trained in martial arts and undefeated against "normal" fighters, to suddenly be taken down and **choked out** by a scrawny fighter half his size just because the squirt knows grappling holds.

But that's the way it is. When a decent grappler meets ANY other kind of fighter, you better bet on the grappler, if he's able to get ahold of his opponent. It doesn't seem fair... but that's the way it is. If you come across some bad-ass who wants a piece of you, and he knows even a *little bit more grappling* than you do... you may as well just say goodbye.

Because you're going down and out.

Unless... unless you *learn the secrets of escaping* from those holds. And, until about twelve days ago...

NO ONE Outside The "Inner Circle" Of World-Famous Ground Fighters Had A Clue What These Secrets Of Escaping Were!

But I know. And I have the secrets on videotape. And you know what's *really* cool? What's cool is that...

These Secrets Are Actually

Very Simple To Use... Once You Know What They Are!

Look. I know that you know something about fighting. You know that the fighting world is *constantly* changing, and **ONLY** the guys who are hip to the latest secrets have a chance at winning a real "win or die" fight in today's mean streets.

That's why **THESE** secrets are so important. Today, you could train for *twenty years* in a vicious martial art, lift weights until your arms are big as trees, and toughen yourself up by living for weeks in the wilderness eating raw squirrel meat and drinking mud... and you would **STILL LOSE** a fight against a grappler who knew how to put you in an "impossible" hold!

But that's all about to change forever... now that the "insider" secrets have finally been revealed by my company. And you're among the **FIRST NINETY GUYS** to know about it!

Here's what happened: I got a call (about a month ago) from this guy **Mark Hatmaker**, who said he'd discovered how to **BEAT** grapplers. I doubted him, of course - I'd just watched, for the eighth time, my personal copy of the video of that Russian Sambo expert dismantle Tank Abbott in the **Ultimate Fighting Challenge** final. For me, and for every other fighter in the world, going up against a good groundfighter is like charging a **machine gun nest**. *Certain failure.*

But this Hatmaker guy insisted he'd figured it all out. How? By spending **NINE YEARS** studying the **BEST** groundfighters in the world... and picking apart their favorite holds until he discovered the **secret of escape** for every hold. I met with Hatmaker... and guess what?

He Really Has The Secrets!

And you'll see him *prove* it, over and over, in your video. (He shows you how to quickly and easily bust out of more than **3 dozen holds** - all of them previously labeled "impossible". That's way more holds than you'll *ever* see used in the street.) This Hatmaker dude is just 5'8" and *maybe* 150 pounds soaking wet... and yet he **CANNOT** be held down by even the most painful and complex hold, no matter how much bigger and stronger his opponent is. After all those years of learning the *tricks* of the grapplers... he has single-handedly **dismantled the advantages of all groundfighters!** (Hatmaker's been a professional martial artist for twenty years, and has spent every second of that time challenging *everything* that other fighters called "impossible". Just give him **ten minutes** of your time... and you'll be convinced, too.)

This is just amazing stuff. **NO ONE** outside the "elite inner circle" of the Brazilian groundfighting "royalty" has **EVER** been allowed to know the secrets of escaping "impossible" holds. **NO ONE!** They know all too well that, once the secrets of escape are known...



The Advantage That Groundfighters Have Over "Normal" Guys Is GONE Forever!

To tell you the truth, I'm almost *sorry* to be revealing these secrets. But it has to be done. I can't in good conscience keep this critical information away from you, or from any of my favorite clients. It's too important.

And it's going to *change the fighting world* - again - **forever**.

However... because this is such an amazing story (and a little hard to believe, given the absolute *dominance* of groundfighters for so long)... I am **NOT** asking you to **risk any money here**. I have constructed an offer that will allow you - if you so choose - to see **ALL** of these astonishing secrets for **FREE**.

What's more... if I can't convince you these escape secrets are the **REAL THING**...

I Will Pay You \$10 From My Own Pocket Just For Your Trouble!

So here's the deal: I hustled Mark Hatmaker down to the film studio to get all his escape secrets on videotape. We filmed this fighting expert for several days, and condensed only the **BEST** stuff onto two hour-long videos. These "escape" secrets are easy to learn, and simple to use once you know what to do.

In fact... once you see this tape package... I **guarantee** (with my *own* money) there will be no grappler **ANYWHERE** who could take you down and **KEEP** you down!

But you need to see all this for *yourself*. To do that, just call my office at **1-800-899-8153**. Ask for **Department IH-15** and tell whoever answers you want the **"Impossible Escapes"** package.

You will be *rushed* the special 3-video package we've set aside for you. (I'll tell you about that **third** video in just a second - it's gonna blow your mind!)

You don't risk a penny... because you have my special **"Total Satisfaction Plus An Extra \$10 In Your Pocket Guarantee"**... though you need to pay the \$69 this package costs up-front. I *have* to do it this way to weed out the guys who aren't **SERIOUS** about learning these amazing fighting secrets. You can use your credit card on the phone, or - if you prefer to pay by check or money order - just fill out and mail the **Priority Order Form**. (By the way, I was offered - and turned down - ten *thousand* dollars **NOT** to let this video package out to guys like you - just because there's so much at stake for the grappling experts! You can't learn these secrets *anywhere* else, not for a million dollars - not even in a **Brazilian "war" studio!** This is the **FIRST TIME EVER** anyone's revealed these astonishing secrets, to *anyone* outside the **"Top 20"** groundfighting "royalty"! Think about that.)

Here's why you don't risk a cent: Once you get the tape package with, I insist that you take a *full 6 months* to

look it over. Watch it, train with it, use what you've learned. Most importantly, **test it out** by getting that big asshole to pin you, and then *humiliate* him by quickly escaping. **Prove** that these secrets work, for yourself.

If, at the end of 6 months, you aren't **110% happy** – for *any* reason, or for *no reason at all* – just return the videos (in *any* condition) and we'll immediately refund your \$69. What's more, just because you trusted me enough to give this package a "look-see"...

I Will Send You Another \$10 From My Own Pocket!

That means, not only do you *not risk a cent...* but you'll actually come out **ten bucks ahead**, just by checking this deal out. You won't find a more fair or generous offer in the entire fighting world. I can make this "bank-breaking" offer **ONLY** because I know these secrets are the **REAL THING...** and I am only offering this stuff to the serious fighters from my "hot list", who *know* the real thing when they see it.

There's just one "catch": You *must* call and order the videos we've set aside in your name **within the next 11 days!** Why? Because I've only duped a small number of videos – this stuff is *too advanced* and *too dangerous* to lose control of.

So don't delay. Call right now (or mail the order form, or fax it), and we'll **rush** your package out to you by return mail. Once you see what all the fuss is about, you'll realize just how *important* this fighting knowledge is. **NO GRAPPLER WILL BE ABLE TO HOLD YOU DOWN AGAIN!** That's just an amazing "secret weapon" to have whenever you're attacked or forced into a fight (especially against a larger, meaner and more skilled opponent!).

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Bob Pierce

P.S. Almost forgot. There's a *third* videotape in this package, and it's called "**Ground Zero**". This amazing bonus tape is crammed with balls-out "survival fighting" secrets... and it's yours to **KEEP, free**, as my gift to you for checking out the "**Impossible Escapes**" videos.

In this **free bonus video**, you'll learn

incredibly vicious and *nasty* fighting secrets that will **instantly demolish critical bones and damage vital organs** in your attacker. (These are the most bloody fighting secrets I've *ever* witnessed – yet, I'd use them in a heartbeat if my life was on the line!) These simple techniques instantly "trump" *any* advantages in size, strength or skill your opponent has... and immediately allows you to **END** the fight by **inflicting blinding pain and completely dismantling his ability to fight back**. You'll also learn how to tell if your attacker is about to **pull out a weapon**, and what to do in the next half-second to *make him wish he hadn't*. Plus – how to use everyday "blunt objects" that are *always* within reach as weapons he *cannot defend against*. (You'll finally know the world's top fighters secrets of using *anything*

handy as a **deadly weapon**.)

These vicious secrets are **NOT** for use unless your life is in danger, and you must put your attacker down for **GOOD** in order to survive. **You'll be astonished at the amount of pain and damage you can inflict in just TWO SECONDS with these brutal secrets...** but that's what is needed when you're up against the wall.

Again, this free bonus tape is yours to **KEEP**, even if you decide later to send the "**Impossible Escapes**" tapes back for a refund (and your extra \$10 from my pocket). It's my gift to you, for trusting me and giving this information a "trial run" yourself. But you must get back to me right away. Call **1-800-899-8153 (Dept. IH-15)** and get this show on the road.

GUARANTEE

"I want to make this as easy on you as possible, so I've insisted that this entire package be **100% RISK FREE** to you. If you are not completely satisfied *for any reason*, just return the package to TRS and they will refund **every penny** of your purchase price -- *no questions asked!* You won't find a more generous guarantee anywhere else!"

-- Mark Hatmaker



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YES! WOW! I can't believe you've finally discovered the secrets to escaping

"impossible" grappling holds! Knowing these secrets mean I can NEVER be taken down and out by an attacker who knows groundfighting, and that means I have the fighting secrets known by only a handful of the best fighters in the world! Amazing! Plus, I don't risk a penny, with your 6-Month Double Guarantee... and, if I do decide to return these videos, I get my money back, no questions asked, PLUS another \$10 just for my trouble. **AND**, I get to KEEP the bonus video on "Ground Zero" fighting secrets! That's just an *amazingly* great deal. Please rush the package you've set aside in my name. Here's how I want to pay:

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it is. Through the intelligent use of exotic alloys and synthetics, Emerson has built a knife that is in the finest tradition of quality bladesmithing, but takes full advantage of the potential that new materials offer for superb and lasting service. The Handle is G10 epoxy-glass laminate; the blade is 15.4cm stainless and is available Black-T (hard Teflon) coated or matte hard chrome. The Mach-1 BTS is available with serrated or plain blade to suit your duty requirements.

Slender in relation to its utility, the Mach-1 BTS has a spring steel "pocket" (or LBE, belt etc.) clip for secure and easy carry. Emerson also makes automatic versions for sale to those in certain professions (or consenting political jurisdictions), but thanks to the perfectly well-placed and ergonomic, ambidextrous thumb stud atop the blade, the Mach-1 BTS is ready to go to work as fast as you have it in your hand: A nudge and a flick of the wrist and the blade is securely locked open. Due to the position of this ambidextrous thumbstud (anything truly *ambi* is greeted kindly by those of us of Southpaw persuasion), the position of the knife in the hand is the same for opening as it is for use. This means the knife is ready to go to work in one fluid motion, with no shifting of position in the hand.

This is particularly important for those of us who over the years have lost or bugged enough hand components we are wont to drop things — because with no shift of the grip, there is one less chance to drop the knife. Even if you are not clumsy but work over or under the drink, there are two well-placed and strong lanyard holes in the butt.

The spine aft of the top-mounted thumbstud is grooved, as is the forward part of the lower grip. This, along with a very pronounced cutout for the index finger on the bottom of the grip, and their hard but precise texture, ensure that if you drop this cutter, it's your fault. Emerson knives carry a lifetime guarantee against defects in materials in workmanship, but we don't think you'll ever collect on it.

Like gynecologists and corset fitters, knife reviewers eventually learn to control the impulse to grab everything they work with, but the new Emerson Mach-1 BTS was difficult to part with, indeed.

Contact Emerson Knives, Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 4180, Torrance, CA 90510-4180; phone: 310-542-3050; fax: 310-793-8730.

KG-1, 2, 3, 4

The best gun cleaners and lubricants are like motor oils: The one you use faithfully beats any other you do not. But that is not to say some are not better than others. We recently tested a family of cleaners and lubricants put out by KG Systems. They com-



prise a four-step cleaning and lubricating/protecting process, but which steps you actually go through on a particular cleaning session will depend on what is required by the condition of the gun in question.

Unlike smokeless powder which is an unstable chemical (nitrocellulose in various iterations), black powder is an intimate mixture of fuels (charcoal and sulfur) and an oxidizer (saltpeter). What this means is, no matter how fine a grade of black powder you are using, it will invariably leave behind fouling comprised mostly of unburned charcoal — carbon. This smutty deposit will also have traces of nitrate in it, which draw water and provide the oxygen to cause horrible rust.

Continued on page 76

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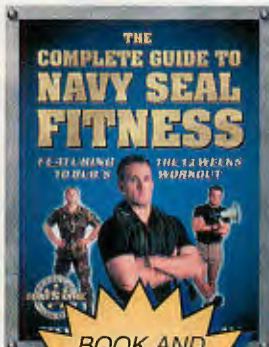
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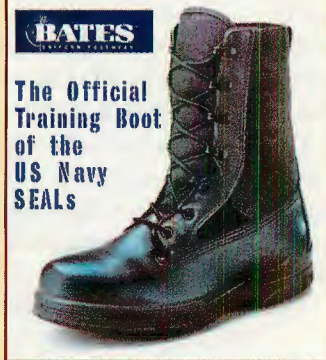
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A close-up photograph of a hand holding a Glock 22C pistol. The pistol is dark-colored and has "GLOCK 22C AUSTRIA" engraved on the slide. A bright muzzle flash is visible from the barrel, and two plumes of white smoke are rising from the top of the slide, demonstrating the parallel port compensation system. The background is dark and out of focus.

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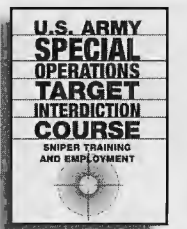
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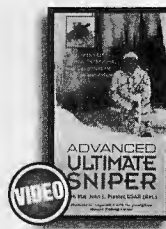
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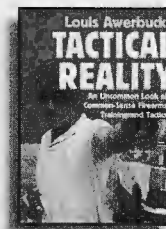
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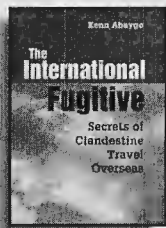
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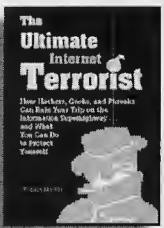
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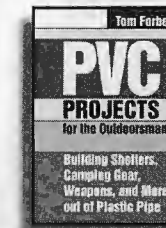
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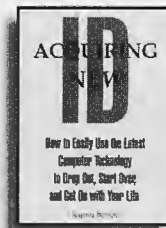
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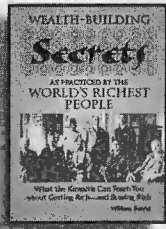
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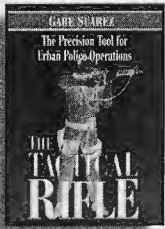
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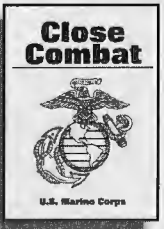
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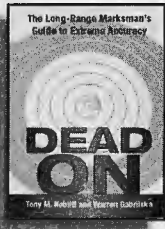
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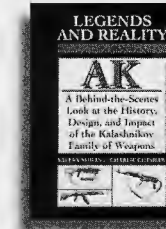
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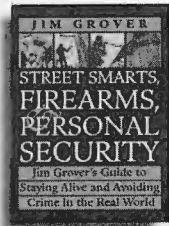
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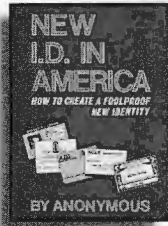
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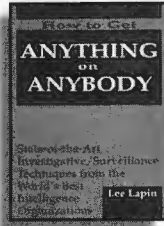
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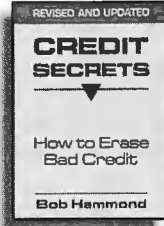
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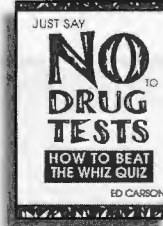
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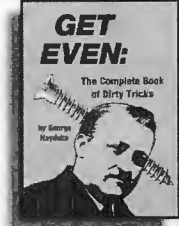
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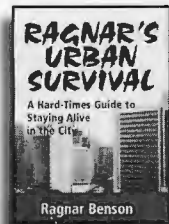
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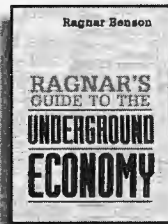
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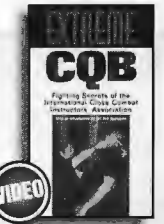
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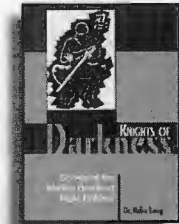
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FLAK

Fear Of Phobias



I just read the May issue of *Soldier Of Fortune*, where the word "hoplophobic" was used. It took my 13-volume Oxford English Dictionary to find this ... I have also noted in *Soldier Of Fortune* such words as "lixivate" (Aug. 1988) which I have never seen written anywhere else, and "limbeck" which A. E. Housman had in one of his poems, but which I have never encountered anywhere else.

Before I started to subscribe to *Soldier Of Fortune*, 15 years or so ago, I figured from my constant perusal of the liberal press, *SOF* would be staffed by a bunch of troglodyte Calibans who could not spell synecdoche for female genitalia without using the letter "k."

I have always been amazed at the high caliber of writing. It shows you don't have to be a liberal or hoplophobic to learn and retain something about grammar and writing style.

All best wishes,

Murray C. Zimmerman, M.D.
Capt., M.D. AUS (Ret)

We are, of course, a bunch of troglodyte Calibans, but we chipped in and bought us a dictionary, and from it we learned ourselves English. Sometimes those who have gone to school and read books and everything amaze the rest of the staff, too.

Time For Unity

I just want to say to those folks out there who say they won't join the NRA because

the organization is "compromising" or "political" — turn in all your guns. If you believe in something then stand up and be counted. I don't always agree with the NRA but two years ago I finally said enough and rejoined after 12 years of not belonging. Hiding your guns and mumbling about black helicopters is a sure-fire way of losing everything in a very short time. These "non-conformists" claim that all the NRA is doing is practicing delaying tactics and that never lead to victory. Well, sometimes you have to do that until the situation is in your favor. Right now the opposition has a lot of momentum on its side, but if we all get out the vote and join the NRA, then maybe we can reverse the situation.

This country is a long way from Bosnia, we aren't ready for warfare in the streets and anyone who's been to Bosnia should be grateful for that. I saw it and I don't care for it. Like it or not we are having to fight the battle in the political arena and the court-

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Jeff Cordell
Rigby, Idaho

Grab The Reins

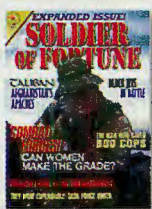
RE membership in the NRA, if you're not a member, you don't vote.

If you don't vote, you can't make a difference.

Do what I do — maintain voting membership in the NRA and vote for Robert K. Brown for the board of directors.

Follow me,
Cmdr. John C. Hinckle
Poway, California

Fatal Laws



Was *SOF's* head in the sand (or elsewhere) when you decided to run the Jeffrey MacDonald story? He conveniently left out a couple of issues. 1) his staunchest supporter Freddie Kassab quit supporting him when he realized,

through the good doctor's story and re-enactment of the crime scene, that it couldn't have happened the way MacDonald said. 2) Why did MacDonald call Kassab (it's on tape) and tell him that he (MacDonald) and a buddy tracked down and killed one of the supposed killers? 3) He hired Joe McGinniss to write the story by sitting in the court and going through the evidence. When McGinniss wrote the book *Fatal Vision*, MacDonald sued McGinniss for not telling it MacDonald's way. *SOF's* credibility is shot with me — cancel my subscription NOW.

J. Thomason
via e-mail

Fred Bost, co-author of Fatal Justice, replies:

Thomason has bought a story of Fred Kassab at the crime scene re-enacting MacDonald's claims and deciding immediately they were lies, and of Kassab supposedly suspecting MacDonald after he lied about killing an assailant. These are fiction items designed by Joe McGinniss and Fred Kassab for the book Fatal Vision.

The truth? While awaiting discharge in 1970, MacDonald told his lie to placate Kassab's desire for vengeance [in the story]. Kassab discounted the story as BS. Four months later, with Kassab furiously writing government agencies on behalf of MacDonald, CID agents decided to try and "turn" him. In March 1971 they had him visit the murder quarters. It failed its pur-



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pose. An entry in the CID log dated April 27, 1971, states, "Both Kassabs [Mr. and Mrs. Kassab] still exhibit a strong feeling that Dr. MacDonald did not participate in the murders." In fact, the Kassabs gave MacDonald a going away dinner in July 1971 before he moved to the West Coast.

It's not surprising that the lawsuit against McGinniss was for fraud. All but one juror favored MacDonald. McGinniss awarded \$325,000 to MacDonald to avoid a second trial. Let's face it, the facts are unbeatable.

Fred Bost
Co-author, Fatal Justice

Coup d'état In Miami



This is the best analysis I've seen of this chilling attack. I hope you'll publish this article and the commentary on your web site.

I have a better understanding of the mental processes of the German population in the '30s now.

We live in interesting times, and they are getting more interesting almost daily. Thanks for the good work.

J.L. Jones

Give 'Em A Chance

Concerning your current issue on women in the combat arms and whether or not it is a good idea, maybe you should look at the success of the same program in the Canadian Forces before you make your decision. I have been an avid reader of your magazine for about five years now and I have to disagree with you on the idea that women have no place in the combat arms. I currently serve with a number of highly skilled and capable females and I am proud to say that I can and will entrust my life to the fighting women in my troop. So far the skeptics that say they can't pull their weight, to them I say: Can you hump a 120-pound rucksack 13 miles on an injured knee just to pass a combat course and then complete a section attack five minutes after the ruck-march, because when you can then you can say that they don't stand up to combat arms, but until then I have personally seen the women in my unit do the same ruck-march with bum knees and backs and live to tell the tale.

I don't know about all the women out there that are attempting the combat arms, but I wish them luck; and to the guys out there that don't think they can haul their weight, you don't know what you can do until you try, so give them the chance to prove to you that they have the right stuff because I personally know that they do. Say what you will, but women are just as capa-

ble as men in regards to combat arms trades, we just have to give them a chance.

Adam Vint
via E-mail

Canadian Ghillie Suits?



I was wondering if you know of a place that sells ghillie suits, in Canada or relatively close. Greatly appreciated.

Tyrone
Via E-mail

Contact Andy LeBlanc, UCD Industries
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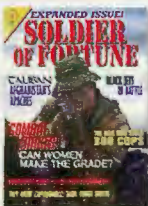
Biased?

Is your magazine for people of colour or is it as racially biased as it appears to be?

no name
Via E-mail

SOF is for anyone who finds interest in the topics that we report. Race or pigmentation is not an issue with us, although we do take pains to try and hate all enemies of liberty equally.

A Bite Out Of Enforcement



I am a DC police officer and I work the mid-night tour in a district that is exclusively black. LTC Brown really hit the mark with his article relating to the dilemma we face each night. I learned the hard way to just go in service,

park the car, and read the latest issue of *SOF*. I was suspended and investigated by IA for assault because I stopped a known dealer at 2330 in a park known for crack sales. He refused repeated commands to take his hand from his waistband area and was trying to elude me. I did what I was taught using textbook procedure, and a complaint was subsequently made. I have since been cleared yet I have not been restored to full-duty status.

What a raw deal the taxpayers will end up getting. I have been on paid leave for 6 months, and when I go back, I will never again care about keeping my beat clean, as I have been burned.

I will, however, have more time to read *SOF* and practice for the 3-Gun Match in Vegas. Thanks to LTC Brown and the rest of the fine staff for a fantastic publication that tells it like it is.

OFC W.R.F. MPDC

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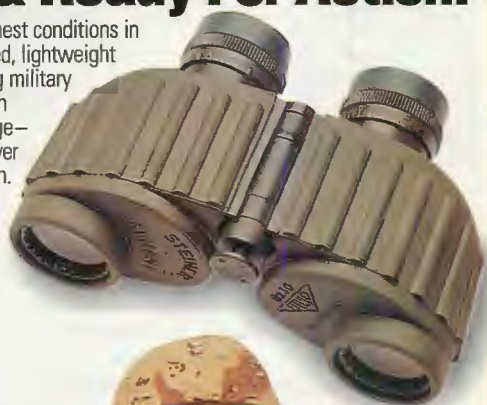
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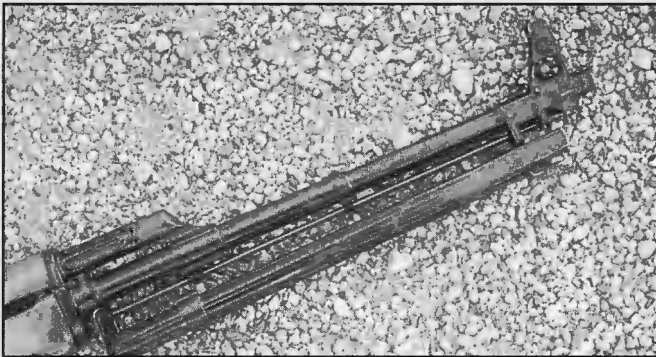
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Kalashnikov's SAW



(left) Mikhail T. Kalashnikov's reliable and lightweight SAW, the RPK, is popular with most of the troops to whom it has been issued. Of the three feed devices available for the RPK, the robust and compact 75-round drum magazine is by far the best choice. (above) RPK buttstock, taken from the belt-fed RPD SAW, was designed so that the operator's support hand can be wrapped around the front of the buttstock at the bottom to provide a stabilizing effect when firing from the prone position. (above, left) Whenever possible, the RPK should be fired off its sturdy bipod. The RPK barrel is about 7 inches longer and somewhat heavier than that of the AK47/AKM.

Adopted by the Soviet Army at the end of World War II, the RPD (*Ruchnoi Pulemet Degtyareva*) squad automatic weapon (SAW) served with the Russian armed forces until 1959 when it was replaced by Mikhail T. Kalashnikov's RPK (*Ruchnoi Pulemet Kalashnikova*). Both of these weapons were chambered for the then standard 7.62x39mm cartridge. The chambering was changed to the 5.45x39mm round with the introduction of the RPK-74. The RPD is belt-fed and weighs 15.6 pounds. The RPK is magazine or drum fed and weighs only 11 pounds. Neither of these SAWs was provided with barrel change capability. This limits their deployment to short bursts. They often fall short in the sometimes-required sustained-fire role, as firing more than 80 rounds without interruption will often lead to cook-offs. I have personally witnessed both this unpleasant phenomenon and the front handguards of these weapons bursting into flames. Since the RPK fires from the closed-bolt position and weighs less (with a resultant reduction in the barreled-receiver's "heat sink" capability), it will overheat and cook-off even more quickly than the RPD. To help alleviate this, the RPK's pinned and riveted receiver is formed from 1.5mm-thick sheet metal instead of the 1.0mm-thick material used to fabricate the AKM. Some parts, such as the bolt, are usually interchangeable between the RPK and AKM.

The RPK has been manufactured since its adoption at *Vyatskie Polyany*, in the Kirov region near Russia's border with Tatarstan. Six thousand of the city's 60,000 inhabitants work at the *Vyatskie Polyany* Machine Building Plant (known as *Molot J.S.C.* — the word "molot" stands for "hammer," as in the old Soviet hammer and sickle logo). *Molot* is a justifiably famous facility in the history of Russian small arms. During World War II this factory manufactured two and a half million PPSH41 submachine guns. At that time they also produced about 350,000 flare signal pistols. Weapons made at this facility were roll-marked with a communist five-pointed star in a shield.

Overall length of the Russian RPK is 40.75 inches. The barrel length is 23.25 inches, about 7 inches longer, and somewhat heavier, than that of the AK47/AKM assault rifle. The barrel has four rifling grooves with a right-hand twist of one turn in 9.5 inches (241 mm). There is no flash hider, but the muzzle is threaded, apparently to accept a BFA (Blank Firing Attachment), and a thread protector is held in place by a spring-loaded detent rod. The RPK is also equipped with a sturdy bipod. The command height (the distance from the bore's axis to the ground with the bipod deployed) is about 11.5 inches and is not adjustable. Whenever possible, the RPK should be fired from the prone position off its bipod. The large and

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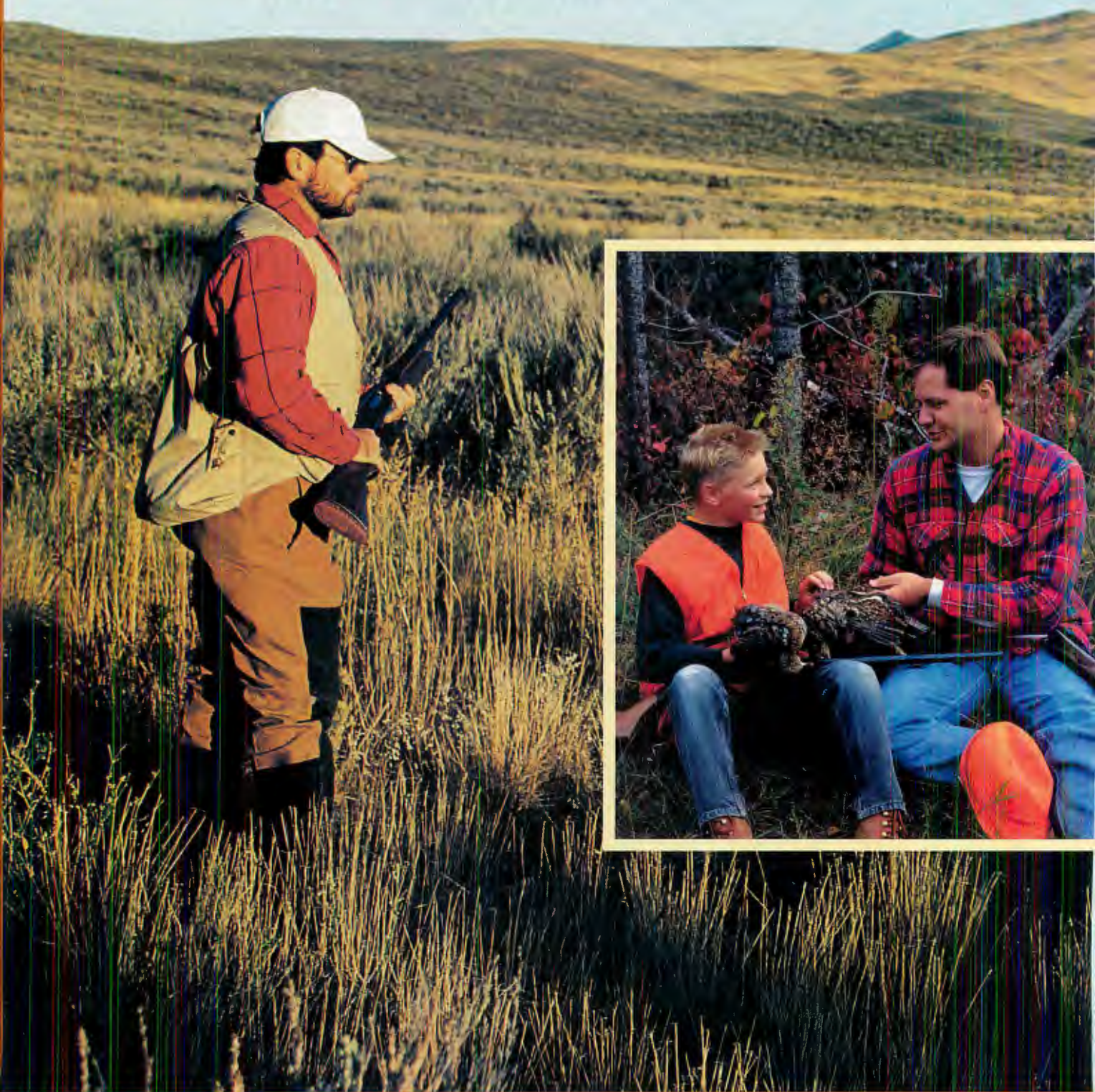
**Reno's Justice Dept. Says Individuals
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**White House Blames "Hunting and Sport
Shooting Culture" for Violence in America**

Lawsuits Could Shut Down Firearms Industry

More Public Lands Closed To Hunters

On Election Day, your children and grandchildren are depending on you to defend hunting and preserve our cherished way of life.





On November 7th, make your voice heard.

You'll never forget when your father gave you that first gun, or the first time he took you in hand to teach you what it meant to be a responsible sportsman. For millions of families, hunting has forged bonds that can never be broken.

But at the dawn of the twenty-first century, our heritage is under attack as never before. Janet Reno's Justice Department says you have no right to own a firearm. Politicians blame the hunting culture for the problem of violence in our society, while the media portrays our sport as barbaric and outdated. Meanwhile, unwise development and new government regulations have closed millions of acres to outdoor enthusiasts.

Future generations are counting on you to preserve our cherished way of life. On Election Day, November 7th, make your voice heard. Vote for candidates who respect our firearms rights and support our hunting heritage.

Tomorrow's hunters will thank you.

For more information, call 1-800-392-VOTE.



Only by voting can we save our hunting heritage



Today, we live in a society that is less and less receptive to the pastime that is so special to us. With every passing day, the United States is becoming more urbanized, less knowledgeable about wildlife management issues, and more hostile to our way of life.

The future of hunting can only be assured by those of us who live it and practice it. That's why this year's elections are so important, and why it's absolutely essential for every hunter to vote this November.

For the past eight years, we've seen our rights come under repeated attacks from opportunistic politicians in Washington. Time and again, Bill Clinton and Al Gore have shamelessly preyed on the misplaced fears of the American people, never missing an opportunity to exploit tragedy to further their own anti-gun, anti-hunting agenda. In the Clinton-Gore world, the criminal who misuses a firearm to injure or kill is not the problem. Rather, it is America's gun and hunting "culture" that is to blame.

Under this administration, the once non-partisan U.S. Fish and Wildlife service has been twisted into a political instrument to further the White House's social and political goals. Millions of dollars collected from hunters and fishermen in excise taxes and earmarked for the enhancement of our nation's fish and game populations were diverted to fund pet projects of Bill Clinton and Al Gore. They've so corrupted the sportsmen's trust fund that government investigators recently called it "one of the worst managed programs we have ever encountered."

The misuse of government resources is not limited to the Fish and Wildlife Service. Under the direction of the White House, the Department of Housing and

Urban Development is spearheading the effort to bankrupt the American firearms industry through frivolous lawsuits funded with your tax dollars.

But the most telling indicator of the Clinton-Gore Administration's contempt for our heritage was revealed in a Second Amendment case before the U.S. Court of Appeals in New Orleans earlier this summer. Before a panel of federal judges, the government lawyer from the Department of Justice stated that only persons serving in the National Guard were entitled to own firearms, and then only those firearms necessary for their duties. In the eyes of this Administration, you have no right to own any firearms, regardless of their suitability for hunting or self-defense.

If we don't stand together against this assault on our heritage, our children and grandchildren will never know the kinship and tradition that have made hunting such an important part of our lives. And that is why on Election Day, we must put an end to the anti-gun, anti-hunting policies of Bill Clinton and Al Gore.

I hope you will take the time to learn where the candidates stand on the future of hunting, the Second Amendment, and other sportsmen's issues. And I urge you to go to the polls on Election Day and support those candidates who share our views. Nothing less than the future of our outdoor heritage depends on it.

Vote.

James Jay Baker
Executive Director, NRA-ILA



For more information, call 1-800-392-VOTE.
www.NRAILA.org

National Rifle Association—Institute for Legislative Action
11250 Waples Mill Road, Fairfax, Virginia 22030

distinctive buttstock has been taken from that of the RPD. It was designed so that the operator's support hand can be wrapped around the front of the buttstock at the bottom to provide a stabilizing effect when firing from the prone position. The RPKS variant features a side-folding buttstock.

The front sight assembly sleeves over the barrel and is held in place by a single cross pin. The round, post-type front sight is that of the Kalashnikov series and has protective ears. It can be adjusted for elevation zero by screwing it up (to lower the point of impact) or down (to raise the point of impact) in its base. It can be drifted to the right or left for adjustment of windage zero by tapping its cylindrical base pin with a hammer, or, better yet, with a special armorer's tool designed just for that purpose.

The sliding tangent-type elevation scale on the RPK's rear sight covers elevations from 100 to 1,000 meters in 100-meter increments. The open U-notch can be adjusted for windage zero. The spring-loaded windage adjustment knob is on the right side and it must be pulled out to operate. Rotate the adjustment knob clockwise to move the sight and the point of impact to the right, and counter-clockwise to shift the point of impact to the left. There is an additional flip-up open U-notch that has a white horizontal line with a self-luminous dot in the center for firing in low light level environments. It also serves as the 300-meter battle sight setting.

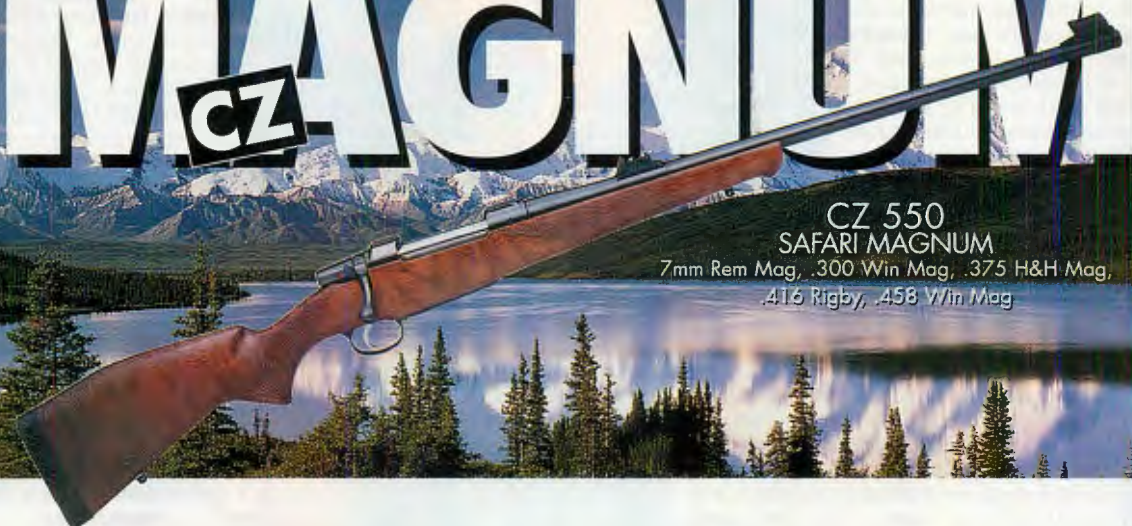
Bottom-fed, the RPK will accept either 30-round AK47/AKM magazines, a 40-round magazine designed specifically for it or a 75-round drum magazine. The worst choice is the 40-round box magazine. With the operator in the prone position, the weapon will invariably "monopod" on the base of the magazine, lifting off the bipod with a complete loss of stability. When I was in Afghanistan in 1983 I examined dozens of RPK-74 40-round magazines and all had badly scuffed floorplates, a certain indication that these magazines were too long for prone firing. The 30-round magazine will not cause the RPK to lift off its bipod legs, but its capacity is too limited for a SAW. The Russian 75-round drum magazine is far more substantial and reliable than any of the Chinese AK drums I have examined. It

has a loading lever on the front that is used to depress the magazine spring before each round is inserted. It must be released and depressed again before another round can be loaded. It has an extension on top that is inserted into the receiver's magazine-well. When installed the drum slopes forward at about a 45-degree angle.

Disassembly of the RPK is quite easy and follows the usual AK sequence. Remove the magazine and clear the weapon after placing the selector lever in one of the fire positions. Push in on the rear end of the guide rod, which protrudes from a square hole in the rear of the top cover, and lift off the top cover. Push the guide rod forward and off its retaining slot at the end of the receiver. Lift it up slightly and withdraw the guide rod and follower from the back end of the bolt carrier. Pull the bolt carrier all the way to the rear and withdraw it from the receiver. Rotate the bolt clockwise until it can be separated from the bolt carrier/piston assembly. The gas cylinder can be removed by inserting the end of the gas cylinder's retaining lever into the narrowest slot on the cleaning kit's tubular container. By this means rotate the lever upward until the gas cylinder can be lifted out. Use of the cleaning kit container as a pry prevents marring the weapon's finish. After cleaning, lubricate lightly. Never put lubricant of any kind in the gas cylinder or on the piston of any gas-operated weapon. Re-assemble in the reverse order. Use the following ComBloc soldier's trick to simplify the final reassembly steps. Place the rear end of the recoil spring guide rod assembly just in front of and below its retaining slot in the receiver. Hold down on the top cover while retracting the cocking handle. The end of the guide rod will jump into the square hole at the end of the top cover and its retaining slot in the receiver.

The RPK has been generally well received by the troops to whom it was issued. It possesses the usual Kalashnikov reliability and is accurate enough for the squad automatic role. Its 11-pound weight is an appealing feature to any ground pounder. The only major criticism against it is the lack of a quick-change barrel and the resultant deficiency for deployment in the sustained-fire role. Its cyclic rate is between 650 to 700 rpm. ❧

MAGNUM



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Technology...Accuracy...Performance

WORLD SITREP

1

UNITED STATES

Feds Skate: As we go to press, word is announced that jury finds federal agents not guilty of any wrongdoing in holocaust that torched more than 80 Branch Davidians and their Mount Carmel compound outside Waco. Since only federal culpability regarding the setting of the blaze was considered, there was obviously much evidence not shown to jurors. • **Onward and Southward:** General Wesley Clark, of NATO fame, reportedly accepts post-uniform post with Arkansas billionaire and kingmaker Jackson Stephens, a big Clinton-backer. • **Faulty Thinking?** As gas prices near \$2 a gallon, you've got to ponder OPEC's oil ministers' thinking. If they want friends amongst Americans, this is the wrong road to travel. • **Kiss 'n' Make Up:** U.S. and Vietnam sign expanded trade agreement which will greatly increase trade beyond the current paltry \$1 billion per year figure. • **On The Border:** Friends in San Diego claim that only 3 of every 25 drug-laden trucks grinding north from Mexico are apprehended at this U.S.-Mexico crossing. Safety inspections are virtually nil. • **The Hungry "I":** FBI fields sinister new Orwellian system, dubbed "Carnivore," to intercept and analyze huge amounts of Email for, of course, the usual acute criminal probe. • **Vince's Hard Drive Lost Too:** As part of \$90 million Filegate lawsuit, District Court Judge Royce D. Lamberth orders Clinton Administration to locate Vince Foster's computer hard drive — lost, stolen or destroyed seven years ago. We salute Judge Lamberth for his guts. • **Not Enough Protection:** The GAO, citing inadequate funding and maintenance, says that most Navy ships do not have sufficient protection against deadly cruise missiles. • **"Give Us Liberty, Or Give Us Meth":** Methamphetamine is U.S.'s new drug scourge, having marched steadily eastward from Hawaii across America. Crankheads in rural areas are dangers enough but wait till the urban Northeast drug market takes some hits. • **Operation Depressing:** Pat Robertson, his "Operation Blessing" and a majority Robertson-owned Freedom Gold, Ltd., are throwing in with tainted Liberian President Charles Taylor to tap African gold market.

4

AFGHANISTAN

Peace Lovers All: China, Iran and Pakistan cooperate to end fighting between *Taliban* and Northern Alliance. Hopefully, war will dwindle to a simmering internal conflict with reduction in outside support. **Hunt For bin Laden:** Taliban, having caved to American and Pakistani pressure, says it will continue to cooperate in search for alleged terrorist Osama bin Laden, thought to be holed-up somewhere in-country.

9

PHILIPPINES

Rumble South Of Manila: Extremist Abu Sayyaf group grabs several more hostages on southern island of Basilan and engage in more firefights with government forces. Meanwhile, parts of Mindanao brace for upsurge in guerrilla activity. Journalists, especially foreigners, are kept out. President Joseph Estrada seems poised for situation to worsen if Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) opts to escalate violence in the south — and the north — this time targeting government infrastructure.

11

TIMOR

Half-A-Dogfight: Indonesian warplanes buzz unarmed RAAF jet in international airspace, infuriating Australia. In recent months, four other aircraft, all F/A18s, have been intercepted.

5

CAMBODIA

Under The Wire: Chhouk Rin, whose Khmer Rouge Gs led attack near town of Phnom Vour in 1994, is acquitted of resultant murders of three foreign journalists due to amnesty for defectors.

12

ZIMBABWE

Tusk, Tusk: Bob Mugabe's morally and financially bankrupt regime sells more than 8 tons of ivory to China as payment for weapons flown nearly simultaneously into Harare. Meanwhile, sporadic attacks continue against white farmers and their families who, along with black foremen, workers and their families, have been killed, wounded and raped.

2

THAILAND

Hot Time On The Border: Dispute between Thailand and Myanmar is on again. Nasty reports of slavery leak out of the former Burma. Numerous escapees now in Thai refugee camps tell brutal tales. • **Bye-Bye, South Korea?** Foreign Minister Surin Pitsuwan says that withdrawal of Thai troops from U.N. command is a possibility. • **AIDS Update:** As a longtime ex-pat tells me, "Bangkok is AIDS." For you adventurers heading over, don't be stupid.

3

AZERBAIJAN

U.S. Strikes Out: Citing failure to obtain funding, U.S. bows out from pursuit of its pet pipeline project — a 1 million barrels-per-day, \$3-billion pipeline from Baku to Turkish port of Ceyhan. Russia and Iran are in the pipeline derby, but China is also in the hunt — and a number of American oil companies that don't appear ready to fold their tents maintain long-time facilities in Baku.

6

MEXICO

A New Beginning? Vicente Fox's victory in presidential election with 43.8 percent of vote signals new era, and snatches control from decades-ensconced Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). Among Fox's promises are crackdowns on widespread corruption, including drug-trafficking.

7

PORTUGAL

"Here Come Da Judge": At EU summit of 19-20 June, in Faria, it's decided to form 5,000-man police force by 2003 to deploy to European locations requiring civil authority.

8

LAOS

H'mong Rebels' Attack: 60 armed rebels from Laos and Thailand hit customs checkpoint in southern Lao bordertown of Vang Tao. This is latest in series of hostile acts carried out against Laos' communist regime.

7

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CUBA

"Illegal" Elian: Poster child of refugees returns "home" to Cuba and (hardly surprising) is being kept under wraps by Castro regime.

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RUSSIA

Back In The Fold: President Putin includes former Prime Minister Primakov, another former KGB agent with a fetish for centralized state control, in recent official delegation to Europe. • **Mafia Hit:** General Oleg Belonenko is shot and killed outside his company apartment by two hooded gunmen, claimed by local press to be Mafia members. Putin will handle the investigation himself, both to take down corruption and to reassert control over regional governors.

World Sitrep is compiled by the SOF staff with information from various media and correspondents.

COLOMBIA'S COUNTER-COCAINE

COPS

SOF Checks Out The Drug War

Text & Photos by Rob Krott



I sat next to the doorgunner hunched behind his 7.62x51mm mini-gun that he lazily traversed back and forth over the jungle below. I was enjoying the ride in the Black Hawk. As my hair whipped in the breeze and the soot and ash blew off my sweating face, I looked back and watched the burning drug lab fade in the distance. Earlier that morning I'd flown from Bogota to Tibu airfield in a Beech Twin Otter and from there to a drug lab in the Valle de Catatumbo, in Norte de Santander Province along the Colombian-Venezuelan border.

I'd made the trip via UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters courtesy of a recent U.S. aid package. Several lifts of Hueys packed with heavily armed Colombian Counter-Narcotics Police (CNP) had already raided the drug lab I was to fly into. The whole operation was announced on the TV evening news in Bogota and in *El Tiempo*, the national newspaper, the day before: "Tomorrow the police will raid drug labs in the Catatumbo region using 40 helicopters and 1,000 men." So much for operational security.

In the last 10 years the police and army have not dared to enter *la selva* (the jungle) of the Catatumbo Valley. The frontier region of the Catatumbo is marked by rugged, hilly terrain covered with dense forests more than 10,000 hectares of which is under coca cultivation. Previously a

Counter-Narcotics Police airmobile trooper in the selva near coca lab. Note the carabiner and goggles for airmobile ops. Armed with an M16A2 rifle equipped with grenade launcher, he wears grenadiers combat vest with CamelBak.

prosperous farming region, it has become a sanctuary for guerrillas, *autodefensas* (right-wing paramilitary “self-defense” groups), and *narcotraficantes*. Touted as the largest operation of its kind in this region (the government was sending a real message to the drug traffickers and hopefully to the U.S. Congress as well) the *Policia Anti-Drogas* mounted the operation with 1,000 troops, 10 airplanes, and 40 helicopters. Though I never saw all 40 helicopters in the air at once, even with the 10 or so Black Hawks and Hueys in the flight I rode in, we could have made a pretty cool movie if we’d just had Robert Duvall along for the ride and some Wagner blasting.

The Black Hawks mounted 7.62mm mini-guns (capable of 3,000 rounds per minute) while the Hueys mounted a 7.62mm mini-gun on one side and a 7.62mm M60 helicopter door-gun on the other. The M60s had sections of PVC piping wired to the feed tray to route the ammunition belts at the right angle much like the beer cans American G.I.s spot-welded to their machine guns in Vietnam. The first lifts of police troops en route to a possible hot LZ were loaded into the slicks with their weapons pointing out the doors. The unit was heavy with M60 machineguns and M203 grenade launchers. If these guys ran into trouble they could unleash a good deal of firepower. My overall impression was favorable. They were young, fit, well equipped and more importantly: They looked capable.

Wandering around the airfield or undergoing pre-mission inspections in their platoon formations. Those actually making the possibly hot combat insertion into the drug labs wore their Kevlar helmets. Their equipment was all U.S. issue: large ALICE rucksacks, LCE, jungle boots. Some wore the new issue combat harness with a buttpack or two attached. Standard weapons were M4 Carbines (Colt’s new, improved SpecOps version of the venerable Vietnam-era CAR15) and M60 general-purpose machine guns. Many had the new quick-release M203 grenade launcher attachments (shortened from 12 inches to 9) on their M4s.

The M60s had obviously seen some hard use but were serviceable and upon close inspection, well-maintained (although I cringed every time I saw a gunner place the muzzle of his M60 machine gun on the airstrip tarmac and then lean on the butt). The Colt M4 assault rifles were brand spanking new — a sharp contrast to the well-worn, no-blue-left-on-the-barrel 7.62x51mm NATO Israeli Galil battle rifle with attached rifle grenade carried by “Alexander,” a 10-year veteran and professional volunteer soldier of the *Ejercito Colombiana’s Batallon de Countergerilla No. 46 “Heroes de Saraguro”* (Saraguro was a famous battle). Alexander made sure I understood he was a professional, not a conscript. When I asked him, “Any combat here?” he replied: “*Siempre.*” Always.

There is some criticism amongst army troops (and officers) about all the high-

speed, low-drag Rambo gear possessed by the Counter-Narcotics Police, who are essentially airmobile troops, while the army troops who have to hump this rugged terrain must make do with older equipment and heavier weapons.

And the criticism doesn’t end with the equipment. According to one of the Bogota-based correspondents: “The army complains that these guys (CNP) aren’t in very good shape. They fly in by helicopter and maybe only walk two kilometers.” The Counter-Narcotics Police don’t spend as much time humping the bush as the army does. That’s really not their mission.

These were General Rosso Jose Serrano Cadena’s crack troops. Serrano, the chief of the National Police, is a well-known and charismatic figure in Colombia. He’s got an aggressive press office and his staff decorates its walls with magazine covers of the general. But the job’s short on real glamour and long on danger: Serrano requires ’round-the-clock security and lives in government quarters while his family remains in protective exile outside Colombia.



General Ismael Trujillo Polanco, Director of Anti-Narcotics Operations for the National Police.

General Serrano disembarked from his airplane to much fanfare. Members of Bogota’s international press corps had been milling around Tibu airfield all morning and this is what they were waiting for. His sound bite for the day was: “I would prefer to see less consumption (of cocaine) in the United States or in Europe, rather than to have more helicopters, but we have an obligation to do all we can with the best equipment and personnel we can get.”

I wasn’t too interested. I’d already briefly spoken with the director of Anti-Narcotics Operations, General Ismael Trujillo Polanco. Throughout the day’s airmobile operations I noticed that General Trujillo always had a loaded M4 carbine slung from his shoulder. While he was issuing orders to his subordinate commanders it

became obvious to me that Trujillo really enjoyed his job — commanding troops in the field. Dealing with the media was something else entirely. Thin, athletic, and reserved, he was a contrast to the flamboyant, roly-poly Serrano who took center stage. Trujillo had the air of a man who’d much rather be some place else — like a firefight in the jungle.

The day was fast becoming one long, drawn out dog and pony show for the gaggle of journalists to get some good public relations for the Colombian anti-drug effort so Congress would vote the aid package so Serrano could get more Black Hawk helicopters. Scott Dalton, an AP photographer, was there and we yakked a little about the activity.

Not needing a sound bite for the evening news or the next day’s front page, I was along for the ride. I didn’t really have a choice: The only way for a gringo civilian to get a helicopter ride in Colombia is either to join the DEA or the press pool. Fortunately, Captain Felix Buitrago had taken good care of me and now I was on my

way. Climbing aboard a UH-60 Black Hawk and squatting next to the crew chief I flew off to the drug lab — actually a *chagrás* — the small backwoods labs or “kitchens” used for the processing of coca leaf to paste. This one was located near the Venezuelan border. The whole area is disputed territory by the two governments and is a long way from the tenuous authority of Bogota. I speak enough Spanish that I was able to converse with the crew chief, shouting my questions over the beat of the rotors. There hadn’t been much action and the doorgunners were bored.

After a flight of about 15 minutes we made a non-tactical landing at the base of a small hill covered with coca. Instead of coming in hard and fast to flare just off the ground, the crew chief talked the pilot in.

Just as well as it was fairly tight with a few trees and many stumps and downed trees littering the LZ. Perhaps the *narcotraficantes* had purposely cut the trees down to make obstacles to helicopter assaults. A tactical landing here would have been hairy.

As the Black Hawk touched down I grabbed my knapsack, shot the crewchief a smile and a thumbs-up, and jumped to the ground. I moved quickly out and to one side to clear the door, put my little black knapsack (film, water, rations, first-aid kit, and a poncho) on my back, and ran into the tall grass hunched over, not just to avoid the whirring blades overhead, but also just in case some guerrilla, narcotraficante, or run-of-the-mill malcontent was waiting for this moment to send some lead into the LZ.

I turned to take some photos and watched as others attempted to run across the uneven ground. This field was marshy and beneath the tall grass and drying scrub the ground was spongy and dotted with ditches and knee-deep holes. This was not a good place for a combat air assault. I was glad I wasn't charging across this ground under the weight of a heavy rucksack laden with ammo and water and my LCE stuffed with a basic load while taking small-arms fire. A police trooper with an M4 knelt next to me and we exchanged grins as a journalist took a header into a ditch. As the Black Hawk lifted off I moved slowly and surely to the chagras located about 200 meters distant.

We passed a 50-meter-long, tin-roofed shed. We crossed a small footbridge spanning a stream and walked up the bank to another shed. This, the actual processing shed, was concealed beneath the tree canopy. With its well-worn footpaths and uncamouflaged shed the whole operation could be picked out easily via aerial observation. Indeed, on the way in I'd spotted a dirt strip carved out of the selva with a dirt road leading away.

All of this was in a supposedly remote



(above) Alexander, a 10-year veteran of the Colombian army, stands ready for action at Tibu Airfield, in the Catatumbo. Assigned to the Batallon de Counterguerrilla No. 46 ("Heroes de Saraguro") he's armed with a 7.62x51mm Gailil battle rifle. (below) One of the CNP crew chiefs gave a hop to Kroit, who soon learned the Spanish for "Get off my helicopter, now!"



and unpopulated region. But in this region there are hundreds, if not thousands, of coca fields and small processing operations. These small "mom and pop" operations exist to process the raw coca leaves cultivated nearby into coca paste. A one hectare plot of coca will produce 1.6 kilograms of coca paste or base which is then further refined at a "crystal lab" into 1.4 kilograms of cocaine worth an estimated \$20,000 in Miami. Looking up the hill at all the coca leaf I realized this was some very expensive real estate. The leaves are processed with acetone, kerosene, and gasoline. A chagras shed is not a good place to smoke.

The CNP troops were deployed in a loose defensive perimeter — sentries actually. I watched as an NCO moved a patrol past the chagras and deeper into the selva. There was a ridgeline up there and he was no doubt linking up with another unit already deployed up there. They had obviously taken los narcotraficantes by surprise. I stood in the kitchen area of the shed, just 3 feet from bundles of coca base on the other side of the low wall. On a crude wood shelf were piles of fresh tomatoes and packets of Ramen noodles and on the still-smoldering fire sat a pot of frijoles. The coke paste cookers were chased off before they could eat their breakfast beans. Walking around the low wall I inspected the dozen or so plastic-wrapped kilo bundles of white coca paste. Originally destined for sale at a floating market on the Catatumbo River and transport to another remote camp for further refining into cocaine it would now be destroyed by the CNP.

As I moved about in the hot sun taking pictures and talking to the troops another Black Hawk flew in, this one with accompanying gunships flying protective cover. It was the VIP bird. Getting off was Barbara Moore, Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Bogotá, and Luis Moreno, chief of the State Department's NAS (*La Sección de Asuntos Narcóticos*) at the U.S. Embassy. It was easy to spot Luis in his crewcut and khakis. He was over 6 feet tall and wearing a U.S. Embassy baseball cap. I'd seen them both at the airfield with General Serrano.

If it wasn't bad enough already now the dog and pony show started in earnest as about a half-dozen photographers and cameramen tried to get their shots of the VIPs. I found a bored M60 gunner to talk to, made sure I wasn't standing near any kerosene, and smoked a cigarette. After inspecting the site the whole entourage climbed 150 meters up the nearby hill. There was such a nice path through the coca field that I almost expected handrails and a tour guide from the park service and began to wonder if this might not be a set-piece chagras used only for visiting VIPs. That idea was laid to rest when I overheard the police Capitano next to me snap commands into the Motorola in his hand. He had received orders to torch the place. Three crop-dusters, part of a DynCorp contract, came in low over the hill and sprayed the area with herbicides to kill the

coca. I closed my eyes and ducked my head on the second pass as several of the droplets landed on my head and bare arms. I assumed it was safe and non-toxic to humans. Just like Agent Orange.

The troops who had been providing security were now arrayed around the hill-top in a tight 360-degree hasty defensive perimeter. A squad was moving further out on the ridge to secure an LZ for our "extraction." The fireworks were about to begin. Looking down the hill I saw two cops spreading accelerant (the kerosene and acetone that was already there) in the chagras. The fire started slowly and soon spread into a billowing ball of fire that quickly consumed the wood structure. Suddenly, two 40mm grenade rounds exploded on the ridgeline above the burning shed. It sounded like HEDP (high-explosive, dual purpose). I'd forgotten about the patrol I saw hump off into the selva.

The explosions were immediately followed by the unmistakable rattle of small-arms fire. To my ear it was all M4 5.56mm and all outgoing. It only lasted a few seconds, maybe about half a magazine's worth of full-automatic rock and roll. Somebody started talking about "Contact, they're in a firefight!" I just rolled my eyes. Perhaps they police troops had seen some one and loosed off a few rounds, but I didn't think it likely. Very coincidental that they would make contact just after the crop spraying and as the smoke from the burning dope shed mushroomed into the air. It really capped off the whole show.

The camera crews got their bang-bang footage though. I'm sure it was presented very dramatically to the folks watching the six o'clock news from the comfort of their Lazy Boys. I couldn't imagine anyone other than a well-equipped military unit having the cojones to square off against these police



(above and below) Soldiers with lethal friends, an M16A2 and M60, await word to move out on patrol.



troops. Not with all their firepower and air support. The only signs I saw of any possible armed resistance was earlier in the day when I saw a troopie recovering an old double-barrel shotgun from one of the sheds.

These coca leaf processing camps usually have some type of armament around, more for protection from competitors and theft, than for use against the police and army. The "firefight" was very nearly the signal for extraction as the choppers soon landed on the LZ and we loaded up for the flight out.

Since I never received anything approximating a briefing I thought we were on our way back to Tibu Airfield. Instead we landed in a field outside of a small town: La Gabarra. This was the site of a massacre of reportedly about 20 to 50 victims attributed to the autodefensas about two years ago. The autodefensas supposedly issued a declaration that the victims were all guerrillas. The guerrillas have also been blamed for murdering civilians in the La Gabarra area, too.

La Gabarra is not exactly a quiet, peaceful place to live. For the police and the military this was basically a hostile area. They are at

war with the guerrillas, the narcotraficantes, and the autodefensas. Now the troops noticeably tightened up. They even appeared anxious. Here, a few miles from the Venezuelan border, there is very little government presence or support. To a large degree, the area is economically dependent upon coca cultivation. A lot of people in the Catatumbo Valley depend upon coca for their livelihood or are related to someone who works in the coca economy. Going in here and burning chagras and fumigating coca fields is akin to trashing "corn likker" stills in West Virginia. The guerrillas like the area because of its remoteness and the sanctuary offered by the nearby Venezuelan border. I couldn't help but observe that the arrival of some *gringo periodistas*, generals Serrano and Trujillo, and two embassy types made for an inviting target.

Once we were all on the ground the CNP troops saddled up and moved into town in a staggered formation — weapons at the ready. There were a bunch of kids and townspeople watching the helicopters land. It was as if the pied piper had gotten off the helicopter and everyone (except the VIPs) walked through town.

I was tail-end charlie so I had a good look at this urban patrol, which moved up the street from the edge of town. It was a relaxed traveling overwatch formation with two- and three-man teams securing the street intersections, with the bypassed troops leapfrogging ahead. It was almost shaping up as a for real combat patrol instead of the usual escort-the-gringos dittybop.

I noticed some hostile stares and the occasional mean-eyed hombre would cut right in front of me or brush by. In the interest of doing my bit for the local hearts and minds campaign I ignored a jostle or two and kept a smile glued on my face. The troops posted along the street appeared relaxed but their weapons were at port arms and their eyes were busy.

At the end of the street was our destination: the town soccer field. There was a small tent set up at one end of the field. The townspeople were prevented from going onto the field by its wire fence. I noticed that one of the troopers was armed only with a grenade launcher and a vest full of ammo. I wondered if somebody was expecting a problem with the locals?

Something made me look up and to the left as I entered the soccer field — maybe my combat senses kicked in — I knew I was being watched. There was a two-man sniping/observation post in the bell tower of the town church. Squads of troops continued to patrol the town.

I couldn't get a good handle on the size of the "security detachment" but it seemed

about the same size as a light infantry company, though may only have been a reinforced platoon. I'd watched two platoons, heavy with M60s, load out from the airfield for the raid. I knew others were already in the field by the time I had arrived. A squad-sized security detail was posted around the tent as well. Not that it was really necessary as a group of a hundred or so schoolkids was herded onto the field by the nuns and the cops — who were almost as tough in dishing out the discipline as the good sisters. About half the kids were lined up three deep around the three open sides of the tent where the journalists sucked down cups of water and ate ham and cheese sandwiches.

General Serrano and General Trujillo arrived and passed out gifts of small toy



CNP trooper armed with M16A2 rifle with M203 automatic grenade launcher.

police boonie hats to the kids. I wasn't quite sure of the intent, as they were too small for anyone but an infant to wear. There was the usual propaganda as some pre-teen girls held banners promoting education and decrying the evils of drugs. While the whole affair was a blatant propaganda, public relations, and photo-opportunity set-up it also, to my cynical and guerrilla warfare mindset, provided a large measure of security. I mean after all, who is going to open up on a soccer field full of schoolkids? Well, okay, we were in Colombia: Three days after I visited La Gabarra FARC guerrillas put a pipebomb collar around a grandmother's neck to extort money from her banker son. It was booby-trapped and when it detonated it killed her and a bomb squad cop.

There is no mayor here, no town court, no public school system, nor a bank. The Colombian government is represented by

Marcelliano Castiblanco, a 32-year-old police captain who sometimes performs civil marriages. Except for this recent operation, there are no government fumigation and eradication programs here, but Colombian and American officials say this area will be targeted under the new aid plan.

The residents of La Gabarra wanted to know why the government destroys the coca crop, but doesn't assist the local economy with jobs, education, or protection from the paramilitaries, the guerrillas, and the narcotraficantes. Coca production earns a living for many people here. "We all live off of this," Asdrubal Perez, a clothing-store owner who once farmed coca, told a group of journalists. "What are we going to do now?" The government is pledging to provide adjustment loans to coca farmers when it begins a major fumigation thrust planned for later this year in southern Colombia. But in La Gabarra, Defense Minister Luis Ramirez warned people not to expect much in the way of government assistance, stating: "Before there was coca the people didn't get any aid."

Located in an oil-rich area, La Gabarra is only a few miles from Venezuela. There are only two ways to get to La Gabarra: by canoe along the Catatumbo River, or a grueling 10-hour truck ride over dirt roads from the city of Cucuta.

Once dependent upon cattle ranching and crops like plantains and cacao and known as the area's market for banana and mango farmers, over the last five years it has become the epicenter for one of the country's fastest-growing coca-producing regions. The Catatumbo region, which includes La Gabarra, has become Colombia's second-largest coca-growing area, after the leftist rebel-controlled south. Officially, the La Gabarra region contains about 8,000 acres of

coca. Most residents and farmers, however, say the figure is closer to 50,000. La Gabarra is a coca boomtown where a single egg can cost 50 cents.

Every weekend, La Gabarra's normal population of about 2,000 people increases to nearly 10,000. Young men, coca pickers known as *raspachines*, come down from the coca fields in the surrounding hills via Catatumbo River canoe-taxi. In La Gabarra they *rumbea*, (party). They drink, shoot pool, fight, and whore (the small town of La Gabarra now has 500 or so prostitutes). In one weekend, a coca worker who can make anywhere from \$25 to \$150 a day will blow most of his week's salary.

La Gabarra is at the center of the area's civil war. In the past it has been a Marxist guerrilla controlled village. The guerrillas

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Letters From Africa

Zimbabwe's Terror Soon To Become South Africa's?



AP/Wide World Photos

While SOF will cover Zimbabwe's recent elections in next month's issue, this letter from Aida L. Parker, acclaimed publisher of the Aida Parker Newsletter, to SOF's Editor and Publisher, Robert K. Brown, goes far in voicing the anguish many Africans feel in the face of an impending catastrophe.

"Every day brings more evidence of the fateful stench of decay, Africa-style. In our country, decay which starts with ignorance, feeds on the brutality of the fast multiplying hordes, where dog eats dog, rejects all moral restraints and ends in self-aggrandizement, in lust for wealth and power, in intolerance and corruption, crime and chaos. South Africa, after all is said and done, is Africa."

— Aida Parker

Once again, we have huge problems here. As you may suppose, everybody is on tenterhooks over the coming backlash of what is happening in Zimbabwe. Mugabe has always been a ghastly chap. He was a terrorist of the worst type. Before being picked up by the old Rhodesian police, he had encouraged his Zanu terrorists to engage in the most dis-

Continued on page 75



White rancher surveys shambles of his home. Many blacks have also been victims of murder, rape and mutilation, thanks to Mugabe's (above) policy of "stench and decay, Africa-style."

By the middle of World War II, the Germans became convinced that the individual soldier rarely engaged targets beyond 400 meters and that the ability of his weapon to deliver short bursts of full-automatic fire was a desirable characteristic. To these specific ends, they designed a cartridge of reduced ballistic values, the 7.92x33mm *Kurz* (short) round, and the world's first widely fielded true assault rifle (*Sturmgewehr*), the MP43/44 (StG44/45). Picking up on this concept after 1945, the rest of the world raced headlong down the path of intermediate-size cartridges and lightweight, selective-fire assault rifles. The most notable early example was, without doubt, the Russian 7.62x39mm cartridge chambered in the AK47.

By 1950, the British, following this trend, had developed the .280/30 round and chambered it in their EM2 "bullpup" rifle and the Belgian FN rifle before that year's light-rifle trials staged in the United States. Forever the world's power (whatever that means) freaks, the United States Army had taken the position that "there have been no changes in combat tactics which would justify a reduction of rifle caliber and power." Thus the U.S. entry was the "full-power" T65 cartridge (developed as a test round by Frankford Arsenal in 1945), which merely shortened the .30-06 case, a modification made possible by propellant improvements.

In 1954, American military power politics prevailed and a modified T65 cartridge (with the case lengthened from 47mm to 51mm) was finally adopted as standard by NATO and designated 7.62x51mm. This was done without any consideration being given to the desirability of selective-fire capability in a light rifle — a specification that absolutely necessitates the use of an intermediate-power cartridge.

As a consequence, by 1954, the British had adopted an American cartridge they didn't want and a Belgian rifle to shoot it that was their second choice. Amid this background of intrigue and controversy, the era of the FAL began.

Using D. J. Saive's breech mechanism, which closely resembles that of the Russian Tokarev-designed SVT 38/40 semiautomatic rifle, the original FN FAL (*Fusil Automatique Legere* — Rifle, Automatic, Light) prototype was chambered for the German 7.92x33mm *Kurz* round. After its redesign to 7.62x51mm NATO, the FN FAL soon became one of the greatest success stories in the history of modern military small arms. It was at one time or another adopted and used by more than 90 nations, including numerous Latin American countries, the British Commonwealth and Israel. It has been manufactured by Argentina, Austria, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Great Britain, India, Israel and South Africa.

However, the twilight of the FAL and other caliber 7.62x51mm battle rifles occurred almost a quarter of a century ago. While the 7.62x51mm cartridge remains a viable round for machine guns and sniper weapon systems, most armies throughout



the world have by now replaced heavy caliber .308 rifles with true assault rifles firing either the 5.56x45mm NATO or 5.45x39mm intermediate-size cartridges.

However, an extensive market for caliber 7.62x51mm semiautomatic battle rifles still exists in the United States, especially in the civilian arena, where many still perceive the wound ballistics potential of this round to be superior to that of the 5.56x45mm cartridge.

Realizing this, Dave Selvaggio of DSA Inc. (Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 370, Barrington, IL 60011-0370; phone: 847-277-7258; fax: 847-277-7259; website: www.dsarms.com) manufactures FAL-type rifles fabricated from components now made almost exclusively by DSA Inc. at their plant facility in Barrington,

Ill. Ironically, these are without doubt the very best FALs ever produced.

In 1987, Selvaggio began selling Belgian FALs and other high-end semiautomatic rifles. The FAL quickly became the most popular item in his catalog. In 1991 DSA Inc. began selling Brazilian Imbel-manufactured, stripped FAL receivers that Springfield Armory had imported. DSA eventually purchased the rest of the spare parts and accessories Springfield had obtained from both Brazil and Israel. After Gun South, Inc. ceased importing FAL material during that time frame, the demand for FAL parts and accessories increased dramatically. As DSA was short a couple of components needed to complete subassem-

FAL

In Its Finest Form



DSA's SA58: The Greatest Battle Rifle?

Text & Photos by Peter G. Kokalis

blies they ended up making them. After selling 1,000 Brazilian Imbel receivers, no more were available and Selvaggio went to DGFM in Rosario, Argentina. Prior to the 1994 crime bill, he imported 1,000 Argentine stripped receivers together with 3,000 complete barreled actions and other accessories.

The Austrian Connection

After this supply was exhausted, DSA turned to Austria where they obtained both the tooling and blueprints used to manufacture the Steyr StG58 (the Austrian version of the FN FAL). They also purchased over 40 tons of spare parts and accessories, which helped launch the introduction of the SA58

(Semi Auto 58). Prior to this, some surplus FAL parts were obtained from Israel and Germany. DSA has added new tooling and made substantial changes in materials and methods of fabrication. While they are still using some of the old fixtures for parts like the gas regulator, locking shoulder and some of the stamping dies, DSA now has new tooling for most of the components, including the mold for the handguards and the pistol grip. The buttstock itself will be next, with a much-requested version in green.

The SA58 upper receiver is machined out of a solid 19-pound billet of 4140 steel. It's the only rifle receiver in the United States being produced in this way. Steel of this type is harder to machine than the 1060

that was used by Imbel, but is of a better quality. The entire receiver is heat-treated with a proprietary through-hard process that produces between 30-40 on the Rockwell C scale over the whole component without any warpage. The SA58 upper receiver is available either with or without the carrying handle cut, as some high-power shooters believe the absence of this cut improves the receiver's rigidity and enhances the accuracy potential. SA58 upper receivers have the correct type 1 lightening cuts and feed ramp geometry. No other aftermarket FAL-type receivers have been properly heat-treated. Even the Enterprise upper receiver has only been heat-treated on the barrel thread area.

The lower trigger frame and charging



handle are machined from solid 7075T6 aluminum alloy, which is subsequently hard-coat anodized milspec black. Both are optionally available made from 416 stainless steel. The hammer, trigger and sear are investment castings from 8620 steel, machined to size, phosphated, and then precision-ground on the sear edges and hammer engagement notch at the proper angles. The

gas pistons are turned, heat-treated, precision ground and then hard chrome plated. The triggerguards and top covers are stamped from 5000 series aluminum alloy and then hard-coat anodized. The other components, such as the gas plug, regulator, joint pin, frame lock, magazine release screw, pins, lugs, springs and tubes are of U.S. manufacture. Most are screw machine prod-

DSA SA58 Medium Contour rifle generated 0.8 MOA groups from the bench with Black Hills 168-grain BTHP match ammunition.

Adjusting The Gas Regulator

The FAL is gas-operated and fires from the closed-bolt position in both the semiautomatic and full-auto modes. It has an operator-adjustable gas regulator that works on the "exhaust to atmosphere" principle. Under ideal conditions the major portion of the propellant gases is passed through the regulator and out into the air. This system helps to reduce recoil.

If the correct procedure is followed, adjustment of the gas regulator is simple. Start with the gas-regulator sleeve fully screwed up over the gas port. Then rotate the sleeve, with either the adjusting tool or the head of a cartridge, one complete turn so that the gas port is completely exposed. The number "7" on the sleeve will be uppermost dead center and in line with the bore's axis. This is the fully open position of the gas regulator and when a round is fired short recoil will result (the hold-open device will fail to engage).

With an empty magazine fitted to the rifle, rotate the gas-regulator sleeve forward one click at a time (numerically downward), and fire one round only after each adjustment by inserting the cartridge into the chamber through the ejection port. When the hold-open device finally engages, verify this by firing several more rounds single-shot. As a safety margin, rotate the gas regulator forward an additional two clicks and the exhaust regulation is set correctly.

While it sounds confusing, in practice it is not. The gas regulator offers firing with the lowest possible recoil combined with the ability to direct more gas into the system under adverse conditions or in case of fouling.

The gas plug can be rotated 180 degrees to the right by pressing inward on the spring-loaded, L-shaped bar at the front end of the plug. By this means all gas in the system is used to propel a rifle grenade and none impinges upon the gas piston. As this is a *non sequitur* with the SA58, the gas plug should always be left in the position, which displays the letter "A" at the upper dead-center position.

— P.G.K.

ucts. DSA is still utilizing new Steyr components for the buttstock, gas block, bolt carrier and frame lock lever. When the supply is exhausted sometime in the near future, U.S.-produced parts will be substituted.

SA58 barrels are broach cut and hand lapped from improved 4140 chrome moly steel. They feature four-groove rifling with a right-hand twist of one turn in 11 inches. Their bull barrels have a twist of one turn in 10 inches to accommodate heavy match bullets. The barrel blanks are double stress-relieved and then cryogenically treated. The chambers are .308 SAAMI spec and polished as a finishing step to improve extraction. The new models have integrally machined muzzle brakes instead of the threaded and high-temperature silver soldered brakes of the earlier DSA models. These barrels exhibit a significant improvement over the button-rifled blanks used earlier. SA58 barrels are made by Ernie Stahlman of Badger Barrels, who is well-known in high-power, long-range match circles. To conform to BATF standards the integral muzzle device is a compensator, not a flash hider and the FAL-type bayonet lug has been deleted as well.

To date, DSA Inc. has handled over 60,000 FAL rifles and receivers of different makes and models. No one in the United States has this much experience with the FAL series. In my opinion, the SA58 is arguably the highest quality and most reliable FAL-type rifle ever manufactured.

Soldier Of Fortune was recently sent two different models of the SA58 for test and

Method Of Operation

The FAL's operating sequence can be briefly described as follows. After the projectile passes through the gas port in the top of the barrel, some of the propellant gases are diverted into the gas cylinder where they expand and drive the short-stroke piston rearward, which in turn strikes the face of the bolt carrier. The carrier moves independently to the rear about a 1/4-inch, during which time the chamber pressure has dropped to a safe level.

After this free travel, the carrier's unlocking cam moves under the bolt lug and raises the rear position of the bolt out of the locking recess in the bottom of the receiver body. The bolt and its carrier now travel back, compressing the recoil spring. The extractor withdraws the fired case, holding it on the bolt face until it hits the fixed ejector and is propelled out of the rifle through the ejection port.

The recoil spring drives the carrier and bolt forward, stripping the top cartridge out of the magazine and driving it into the chamber. The bolt stops and the carrier continues forward a short distance until its locking cam rides over the bolt, forcing and holding the bolt down into its recess at the bottom of the receiver.

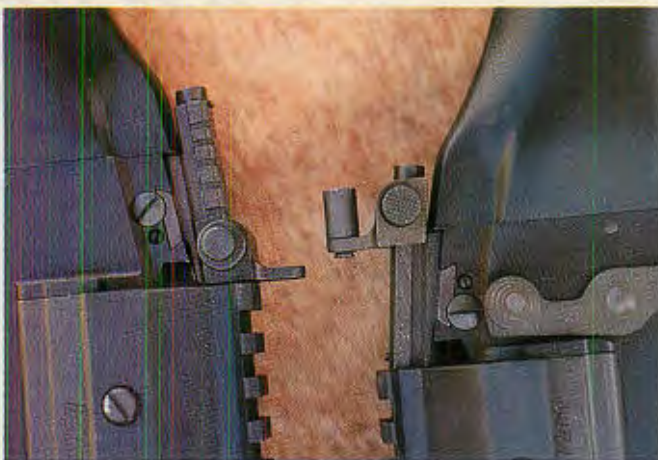
The FAL's trigger mechanism is unique and has been much

copied. It consists of a spring-loaded sear attached to a fixed pin passing through an elongated slot in the trigger frame. The trigger pivots at the front end of this same pin. When the trigger is pulled its shoulder rotates upward and drives the rear end, or tail, of the sear up. The front end of the sear drops down and out of the hammer notch. As there is no auto safety sear on semiautomatic-only versions, the hammer is free to rotate and strike the spring-loaded firing pin. When the hammer pivots back by the recoiling bolt carrier, the sear's nose is pressed into the hammer's notch once again. The stronger hammer spring overcomes the much weaker sear spring and drives the sear's tail back against the shoulder so another round cannot be fired. Releasing the trigger moves the shoulder down and the hammer spring pushes the sear further across while the tail moves on top of the trigger's shoulder. Pulling the trigger repeats the process.

While this is ingenious and reliable, FAL triggers rarely exhibit crisp or light pull weights as a consequence. The trigger pull weight on our SA58 Medium Contour was a slightly gritty, but surprisingly light 5.5 pounds. The SA58 Carbine was about the same at 5.75 pounds. — P.G.K.

(right) For bench testing the SA58 rifles a Leupold Vari-X III 6.5-20X variable power scope was used. It would, however, serve no tactical purpose on a rifle of this type. In the author's opinion, the ideal tactical scope for these rifles would be the 3.4-power ELCAN scope (bottom, right) developed by Ernst Leitz Canada. (below) Close-up of the trigger frame (or lower receiver) group. Note two-position selector lever and disassembly lever toward the rear. (center) The DSA SA58 Medium Contour rifle (top) and the DSA SA58 Carbine.





(above) The unprotected rear sight assembly is mounted on top of the lower trigger frame at the rear. It is a sliding ramp type with a peep aperture and spring-loaded push button lock. Medium Contour specimen



was equipped with a short, Belgian-style, hooded rear sight with a 0.052-inch aperture diameter. (right) Integrally machined muzzle brakes fully meet current BATF regulations.

evaluation: a Carbine and a so-called Medium Contour variant. The Carbine features a 16.25-inch barrel with an overall length of 38.25 inches. It weighs 8.25 pounds, empty. The Medium Contour rifle has a 21-inch barrel with an overall length of 43 inches. It weighs 9.75 pounds, empty. Its most distinctive feature is its barrel geometry, which consists of a match-type bull barrel diameter under the handguards stepped down to a standard diameter in front of the handguards. Both of these rifles carry a matte black oxide finish on the steel compo-

nents and black hard-coat anodizing on the aluminum parts. Other models include 21-inch and 24-inch stainless steel bull barrel models, a Medium Contour with a stainless steel barrel, a stainless steel Carbine, a standard version and a Lightweight Carbine with a gas system reduced by 3 inches that drops the rifle's weight by a 1/2-pound.

Two Tuned FALs

Both rifles submitted to *SOF* for test and evaluation were equipped with iron sights of the type found on most rifles in the FAL

series. The front sight is mounted on top of the gas block. Its substantial protective ears are integral with the gas block itself. It is a round post-type that can be adjusted for elevation zero by inserting the tip of a bullet into one of the holes in its base plate and rotating the sight. Remember to raise the point of impact you must lower the front sight post and visa versa.

The unprotected rear sight assembly is mounted on top of the lower trigger frame at the rear. It is a sliding ramp type with a peep aperture and spring-loaded push button lock. Elevation adjustments are in 100-meter increments from 300 to 700 meters. It can be adjusted for windage zero by loosening the screw underneath the rear sight assembly on the side in which movement is desired and tightening the screw on the other side. Our Medium Contour specimen was equipped with a short, Belgian-style, hooded rear sight with a 0.052-inch aperture diameter.

Both of our test rifles were fitted with optional top covers/scope mounts made of 6061T6 aluminum alloy and based upon the South African scope mount locking system for the R1 rifle, which consists of four independent steel plates with two grade 5 screws per plate. This permits the mount to draw in and down for a positive lock as opposed to straight aluminum or sheet metal rails. There is an integral MIL-STD-1913 rail for mounting optical equipment. There are radiuses around the ejection port portion of the scope mount to inhibit denting expelled cases.

The rifles were shipped to us with Leupold Vari-X III 6.5-20X variable power scopes for accuracy testing on the bench. Scopes of this size and power would serve no tactical purpose on a rifle of this type. The scopes had Leupold quick-release, throw-lever rings and returned to zero whenever they were removed and re-attached. In my opinion the ideal tactical scope for these rifles would be the 3.4-power ELCAN scope developed by Ernst Leitz Canada. It has a picket-type post with stadia line for basic range estimation and an external ballistic compensation dial (available for either 7.62x51mm or 5.56x45mm). While not inexpensive, it remains the most

Laser Bore-Sighting

If you've ever spent an hour or so trying to get a scoped rifle to just impact somewhere on the paper at 100 yards, you know how important a bore-sighting device can be. The slickest unit I've ever used for this purpose is the new Spot Sight, which makes use of a laser beam.

The Spot Sight has a universal arbor system that permits you to insert it into the bores of all calibers of rifles and shotguns from .22 LR to 12-gauge. Use the Spot Sight either indoors, in the shade, or with a cardboard box with a paper target stapled to its bottom. You will not be able to see a laser beam or spot on a target in bright sunlight. A distance between the scoped rifle and the wall or target surface of 12 to 30 feet is required, depending upon the cartridge. Compress the universal arbor spring between your index finger and



thumb and insert the arbor into the bore. Keep the arbor spring and the long index line on the top rear end of the Spot Sight body aligned with the upper dead center of the barrel. When you snap the unit completely into the barrel, the laser beam will turn on. The unit is powered by a common 3-volt camera battery. Always begin with the index line aligned with the number "5" on the Spot Sight.

To bore sight a new gun/scope combination, simply adjust the scope's elevation and windage knobs until the red dot is resting in a six o'clock position on the horizontal reticle line and is bisected by the vertical crosshair. This will be good enough to get you onto the paper. After that it's usually just a matter of fine-tuning with the scope's adjustment knobs.

This is a remarkably easy device to use and it works. The Spot Sight is manufactured by Triune Marketing LLC (Dept. SOF, 424 A King Street, Selma, AL 36701; phone: 1-888-651-3201; fax: 334-418-0971; website: www.spotsight.com). It has a suggested retail price of \$189.

— P.G.K.

popular combat rifle scope with military special operations units and law enforcement tactical teams throughout the world.

These are so-called "Metric" FALs and their 20-round magazines have a locking lug punched out of the front end of the sheet metal body. Some complain that this type is not as sturdy as the "Commonwealth"-type, but I have never experienced problems with them. They hold 20 rounds and are of the conventional staggered-column, detachable box-type design. The British made some experimental 30-round FAL magazines of the Metric-type, but in general, 30-round magazines on shoulder-mounted .308 battle rifles are clumsy and too heavy. FAL magazines must be inserted front end first and then rocked rearward to lock in place in the magazine-well. If a loaded magazine is locked in place with the bolt held rearward by the hold-open device, the first round can be chambered by either pulling rearward slightly on the retracting handle and then letting it fly forward, or by pulling down smartly on the serrated magazine-catch lever.

Essential Gear

A number of FAL tools are available from DSA, one of which is absolutely essential in my opinion. The original Steyr StG58 combination wrench costs only \$10. Either the gas regulator wrench, Belgian front sight tool, or the FAL combination tool for buttstock and pistol grip removal are only \$15 each. Most important is the two-piece extractor tool (used in conjunction with the rod from the FAL combination tool) for \$25. It can be used to remove and install two-piece extractors on all Metric or Commonwealth FALs. FAL extractors are almost impossible to disassemble by any other means and I have had them sail into the sunset trying to use only a punch for disassembly. DSA also stocks a comprehensive inventory of FAL spare parts and accessories like bipods, bayonets and flash hiders for pre-ban FALs.

Testing any FAL for accuracy requires knowledge of how this rifle's method of operation can impact on the group dispersion. If you fire a FAL for accuracy with either a fully or partially loaded magazine, more often than not the groups will exhibit vertical stringing. Remember, the FAL fires from the closed bolt position and when in battery, the bolt drops downward into a locking recess in the bottom of the receiver. The top round in the magazine often impinges on some portion of the locked bolt. The pressure against the bolt body decreases as the magazine follower spring's "stripping pressure" decreases when rounds are removed one by one from the magazine during the firing cycle. This varying force up against the bolt body invariably results in a vertically strung out shot group. To test a FAL's inherent accuracy potential, you should load and fire only one round at a time.

Firing in this manner from a bench rest produced some remarkable results. Using 168-grain BTHP (Boat Tail Hollow Point) match grade ammunition provided by Black

SA58

SPECIFICATIONS

Caliber: 7.62x51mm NATO (.308 Winchester).

Operation: Gas with adjustable regulator and conventional piston. Locking by means of falling bolt that butts against a locking shoulder in a recess at the bottom of the receiver. Fires from the closed-bolt position.

Feed: 20-round, staggered-column, detachable, box-type magazine.

Weight, empty: Carbine — 8.25 pounds; Medium Contour — 9.75 pounds.

Length, overall: Carbine — 38.25 inches; Medium Contour — 43 inches.

Barrel: Broach-cut and hand-lapped from improved 4140 chrome moly steel by Badger Barrels; four-groove rifling with a right-hand twist of one turn in 11 inches. Bull barrels have a twist of one turn in 10 inches to accommodate heavy match bullets. Barrel blanks are double stress-relieved and then cryogenically treated. Chambers are .308 SAAMI spec and polished as a finishing step to improve extraction; integrally machined muzzle brakes.

Sights: Post-type front sight with protective ears; adjustable for elevation zero. Sliding ramp, peep aperture rear sight with no protection; adjustable for windage zero and elevation from 300 to 700 meters in 100-meter increments.

Scope mount: Optional top cover/scope mount made of 6061T6 aluminum alloy and based upon the South African scope mount locking system for the R1 rifle, which consists of four independent steel plates with two grade 5 screws per plate. This permits the mount to draw in and down for a positive lock as opposed to straight aluminum or sheet metal rails. There is an integral MIL-STD-1913 rail for mounting optical equipment.

Finish: Black oxide on steel components; black hard-coat anodizing on all aluminum parts.

Furniture: Black synthetic forearms, pistol grip and buttstock with rubber buttplate.

Accessories and tools: Spare parts, magazines, magazine pouches, slings, light bipod, bayonets, flash hiders, cleaning equipment, gas regulator wrench, FAL combo tool, Steyr StG58 combo wrench, front sight tool, and two-piece extractor tool.

Suggested Retail Price: Complete with one new condition magazine: SA58 Carbine — \$1,495; SA58 Medium Contour — \$1,595.

Manufacturer: DSA Inc., Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 370, Barrington, IL 60011-0370; phone: 847-277-7258; fax: 847-277-7259; website: www.dsarms.com

T&E Summary: The finest and most accurate FAL ever manufactured; based upon the Austrian StG58. Meets current BATF regulations as it has no bayonet lug or flash hider. Superb example of one of the world's greatest .308 battle rifles

DSA SA58 Carbine, fieldstripped.



Hills Ammunition (Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 3090, Rapid City, SD 57709-3090; phone: 605-348-5150; fax: 605-348-9827; call for information about purchasing direct at retail if there is no Black Hills distributor near you), the SA58 Medium Contour rifle consistently fired 0.8 MOA at

100 yards. The 16.25-inch barrel of the SA58 Carbine shot to about 1.1 MOA. This is astounding accuracy for a FAL and is no doubt due to the Badger match grade barrels and the precision used to manufacture these rifles. Most FALs will group no better than 2 to 3 MOA, and 3-inch groups are most common. I base this observation upon my personal experience with a substantial number of FAL rifles of all types. And, in case you're asking, why do I continue to use Black Hills ammunition for most of SOF's tests and evaluations? The answer is quite simple: After extensive testing I have found it to be the most consistent and accurate available.

DSA's SA58 is, without doubt, the finest

and most accurate FAL-type rifle ever produced. All of the many machined parts and subassemblies and its precision assembly add to the cost of its fabrication. The SA58 Carbine carries a suggested retail price of \$1,495. Add another \$100 if you want the superb Medium Contour model. Each comes complete with one new condition magazine. Now, you can purchase a post-ban-type, semiautomatic-only FAL for less than half this amount. What you'll get is a well-worn Austrian Steyr StG58 "beater" parts kit assembled to an out-of-spec, unheat-treated receiver. Be my guest, but don't send me any whining letters of complaint, because this is one instance where you really do get what you pay for. ☒

Omega PROVEN Ground

The Marlin 1894P Guide Gun

by Frank W. James



The lever-action rifle will be forever associated with the history of the American West. Used by ranchers, trappers, hunters and law enforcement officers the lever-action rifle established a reputation for accuracy, reliability and handiness. Lever-action carbines worked well for mounted personnel because of their short overall length and narrow profile when slipped into a saddle scabbard. They also proved popular because most of the time the lever-action carbine was chambered for the same round as the westerner's side arm — a decided advantage when they became embroiled in a gunfight.

Today, our needs are different, but the old standards can still apply to a modern situation. Additionally, the history of the lever-action tends to lessen the impact of its physical presence as opposed to something that is viewed as politically incorrect. We don't personally care if a gun is politically incorrect, but recently political incorrectness has manifested itself in local or state ordinances proscribing severe criminal penalties for violations that prohibit the possession of more efficient defensive rifles.

If there is a practical criticism of lever-action rifles and carbines, it has been they seem to recoil or kick harder relative to their respective calibers because of their downward sloping stocks. Other designs where the stock is more in-line with the bore are perceived as having less felt recoil.



The big benefit interpreted from our testing of the Marlin 1894P "Guide Gun" was the absence of significant felt recoil, an increase in projectile velocity when compared to conventional handguns and an increased ease in target acquisition and accuracy from the easier to shoot carbine as opposed to the conventional handgun. (inset) On the Marlin 1894P there are five ports on either side of the front sight that are angled upward and two more horizontal ports located below and behind them for a total of 14 barrel ports. They work.

In recognition of this, Marlin Firearms Company (Dept. SOF, 100 Kenna Drive, North Haven, CT 06473; phone: 714-898-7535; fax: 714-891-0782; website: www.marlinfirearms.com) has introduced a lever-action carbine that corrects the felt recoil problem, is made in an effective caliber and remains a politically correct defensive rifle. It is the Marlin 1894P.

The Marlin 1894P is an adaptation of Marlin's "Guide Gun" technology which was developed for their thunderous .45-70 lever-action rifle. The Marlin 1894P lever-action carbine features a 16.25-inch length barrel with deep cut Ballard-style rifling. It is chambered for the .44 Remington Magnum round, but will also accept the .44 Special round. The tubular magazine capacity of the Marlin 1894P in .44 Magnum is eight rounds. The sights that come with the Marlin 1894P are a barrel mounted rear sight consisting of a semi-buckhorn folding rear sight and a ramp front sight with a brass bead and a protective hood. For those who object to the hood it can be removed easily. The brass bead at the rear of the front sight is especially appreciated for fast acquisition and quick target reference and is also an acknowledgment of the true role of this firearm. Should the customer prefer an optic sight the top of the receiver is drilled and tapped or these same features may be used to mount a receiver iron sight.

The Marlin 1894P has an overall length of 33.25 inches and an empty weight of 5.75 pounds, which makes it a light and quick handling carbine, but the big plus with this new lever gun is the barrel porting. The "P" in the model designation 1894P stands for "Ported" and it is important difference between this and other models in the Marlin line.

On the Marlin 1894P there are five ports on either side of the front sight that are angled upward and two more horizontal ports

located below and behind them for a total of 14 barrel ports. Do these holes help? You bet!

Even though the Marlin 1894P features a straight grip stock of black American walnut, the downward angle of the rear stock has a tendency to emphasize felt recoil. Not anymore, because the barrel ports eliminated felt recoil to the point that some of the heavier .44 Magnum loads felt no worse than light recoiling .38 Special loads.

Six different .44 Magnum factory loads were chronographed to measure the velocities from this light handling carbine. The fastest velocity recorded came with Hornady's 180-grain JHP round that averaged 1,985 fps. The slowest recorded velocity resulted with CCI-Blazer 240-grain JHP and an average reading of 1,367 fps. The others were Winchester's 210-grain Silvertip that ran 1,607 fps, Hornady's 240-grain JHP which went 1,801 fps and the heavier bullet loads from Speer, the 270-grain JSP Gold Dot, averaged 1,501 and from Remington, the 275-grain JHP, went 1,512 fps. All of these readings are substantially higher than those seen with a conventional .44 Magnum revolver.

The Marlin 1894P is a well-made arm and we encountered no malfunctions during our testing involving over 250 rounds of .44 Magnum ammunition. It is so easy on recoil that it is truly a fun gun to shoot. The 1894P has a crossbolt safety that blocks the hammer

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Jim Grover's Shooting And Self-Defense Videos

Let's face it. The only way to become truly proficient with firearms or any self-defense techniques, is to train under competent supervision. An instructor's trained eye will eliminate bad habits and progressively guide your training to levels you could not reach simply on your own. The reality of course, is that such supervision is expensive. And how do you keep your skills honed and retain the knowledge you gained at these courses? You have to wonder, if you were getting your money's worth if you weren't so exhausted at the end of the day that you could sit down and write training notes.

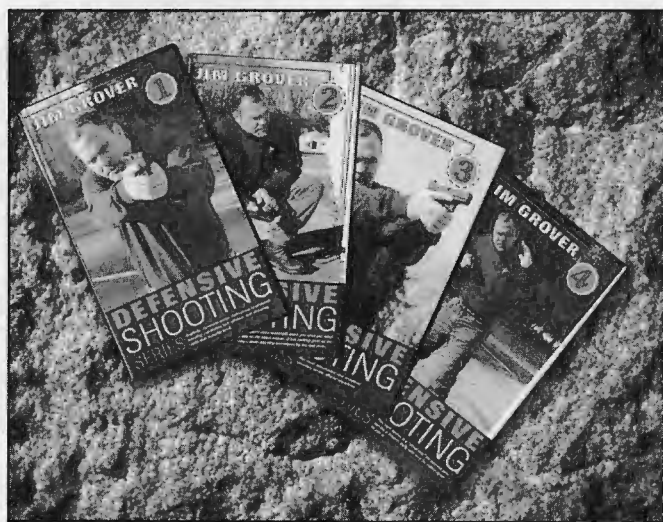
There is an alternative. If you have been to a shooting school, or only hope to attend one day, Jim Grover's "Defensive Shooting" video series, "Combatives" video series, and *Street Smarts, Firearms & Personal Security*, all from Paladin Press (Dept. SOF, PO Box 1307, Boulder, CO 80306; phone: 303-443-7250; website: www.paladin-press.com) come highly recommended.

First are Jim's credentials. He doesn't make a living selling videos or writing articles (you may have seen his column in other gun magazines). Instead, his writings and videos are an extension of his work in the close combat, counterterrorism, executive protection and firearms fields. Grover has trained elite special operations and counterterrorist units all over the world. And this four-part "Defensive Shooting" video series is derived from his real-world experiences. Jim covers grip, stance, trigger control, malfunctions, shooting on the move, low light scenarios, and vehicle defenses. A series of range drills will keep your skills honed. If you want to learn how to shoot, move and win, Grover teaches you how, just as he has taught SpecOps units around the world.

The three-volume "Combatives" series is just as down to earth. This is hard-core, combat-proven hand-to-hand fighting techniques. This is not tournament-winning dojo moves. As Grover says, "The only dirty fight is the one you lose." If you are interested in winning fights, Jim is interested in instructing you how: unarmed fighting, combinations, defenses against knives and guns, disarming techniques and a proven stick fighting system.

Street Smarts, Firearms & Personal Security quite simply

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CLINTON/GORE

Taxation With Misrepresentation

BY JAMES L. PATE

Shooters'
Tax Dollars
Fund Eco-Nazis

AP/Wide World

In his extremist treatise on environmental policy, *Earth in the Balance*, Vice President Al Gore advocates the necessity for a “wrenching transformation of society” to ensure our planet’s survival. Published in 1992, as Gore campaigned for vice president, it is a socialist manifesto that would make private property rights and free enterprise subservient to a totalitarian ecoligarchy of unelected regulatory elites dictating what’s “best for nature.”

Now, as Gore heads into the home stretch of his own presidential bid in November, he understandably has distanced himself from the negative, Big Brother bromides of his book as he tries to convince TV-dazed voters he is a moderate and, as he said on NBC’s *Meet the Press*, a “friend of the hunter.”

The news media, ever objective, has been happy to help him pander such political fertilizer. Richard Threlkeld, of CBS News, for instance, reported solemnly that “Clinton and Gore are centrist, some would say conservative.”

That’s a rather overly broad definition of conservatism for two guys who endorsed more than \$150 billion in tax increases, supported military service and other “rights” for homosexuals, advocated abortion on demand and have seriously eroded our constitutional rights under the Second, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Amendments.

On the environmental front, Clinton and Gore have taken a distinctly radical tact, with plans to breach dams, close roads, otherwise deny citizen access to public lands and re-introduce such destructive predators as wolves.

While Clinton has worked hard to ban private gun ownership, dismantle the military and give away vital technology to the People’s Republic of China, the president let Gore take the helm on natural resources.

Under Gore’s influence, implementation of the nation’s policy toward the great outdoors has become almost as radical and extremist as his book. Probably no better example exists, one ignored by most of the news media, than the financial scandal at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS).

Taxation With Misrepresentation

The battle cry of freedom in the American Revolution was “No taxation without representation!” This has been perverted by arrogant Clinton-Gore appointees at FWS into “taxation with misrepresentation.” Among the revelations of investigations by the General Accounting Office, the House Resources Committee and *Soldier Of Fortune*:

Several weeks before her confirmation as FWS director, Clinton appointee Jaime Rappaport Clarke used money budgeted by Congress for the recovery of endangered species to take a one-week, taxpayer-paid rafting vacation through the Grand Canyon, all on the government clock.

- Tens of millions of excise tax dollars, probably more than \$100 million, collected from hunters, fishermen, archers and sport shooters — money legally required to be returned to state fish and game agencies to enhance fish and game species and benefit those who paid the taxes — have been siphoned off by Clinton-Gore appointees for what FWS bosses described in e-mails as “slush” funds to finance pet projects, many of them illegal.

- FWS officials, on numerous foreign junkets of a questionable nature, used hunting/fishing excise tax funds to pay for liquor, lavish meals and limousine rentals. These funds also financed travel and meetings on reintroduction of the gray wolf, which harms, not enhances, the populations of many game animals.

- The top land purchase priority for FWS for fiscal 1999, was an island to be set aside as a national wildlife refuge. The Clinton Administration wanted to spend \$30 million in Duck Stamp fees and hunting excise tax revenues to buy Palmyra Atoll. Located 1,000 miles south of Hawaii, it is home to only 10 ducks, a real steal at \$3 million per duck. But it also contains two endangered species ineligible for those funds, the Hawaiian monk seal and hawksbill sea turtle. Congress halted the purchase.

In his book, Gore called for a “wrenching transformation of society” to save his version of the environment. Not to worry, though, as now he claims to be “a friend of the hunter.”

- Clarke tried to fire one longtime FWS agent, Jim Beers, a National Rifle Association member whose views on hunting and gun ownership were increasingly at odds with those of Clinton and Gore. Beers refused to approve a federal grant to a zealous animal rights group, the Fund for Animals, which wanted the funds to print and pass out anti-hunting leaflets to school kids.

- While Al Gore pays lip service to the women's movement in general and the plight of single mothers in particular (as the Philanderer-in-Chief gets lip service of another sort from supplicant subordinates), Bonnie Kline, a single mom with a previously award-winning record at FWS is terrorized at work after she refuses orders to erase e-mails wanted by FBI in their investigation of possibly illegal FWS land purchases. The case is similar to an ongoing grand jury probe into allegations that the White House erased e-mails to thwart the investigation of Gore's political fund-raising for the campaign in 1996. Kline was locked out of her office, the e-mails disappeared and she was sent home without pay after testifying before Congress. For her refusal to be dishonest, Kline faces the loss of her job.

- Another animal rights group, the Friends of Animals (FOA), got three FWS grants to buy fuel and help pay members of a special paramilitary unit assigned to arrest elephant poachers in Senegal, even though that nation is specifically excluded from the African Elephant Conservation Fund, under which the grants were approved.

- Clinton's Pentagon also approved the transfer of \$3 million worth of surplus Humvees to the FOA, which also obtained scores of AK-47 machine guns from France that were captured in Iraq, along with magazines and thousands of rounds of ammunition. The U.S. State Department kicked in an additional \$3 million to buy U.S. military gear left over from European base closures. FOA has used Israeli and U.S. mercs to train anti-poaching units in Senegal and other African nations.



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Several weeks before her confirmation as FWS director, Clinton appointee Jaime Rappaport Clarke (left) used taxpayer money — budgeted by Congress for the recovery of endangered species — to take a one-week rafting vacation through the Grand Canyon, all on the government clock — just a hint of how dedicated wildlife funds would be pillaged under her administration. (right) Retired federal fish and game agent Jim Beers blew the whistle when Al Gore's loyal eco-terrorists pressured him to approve a grant to use taxes from hunters and fishermen to print and distribute anti-hunting pamphlets.



courtesy author

Monkey-Wrenching Transformation

This is only a few examples of the "wrenching transformation" of government wrought on the environmental regulatory agencies in Al Gore's quest for a Brave New World.

Gore "is arguably the most powerful vice president in modern history," wrote author Ron Arnold, one of the nation's foremost advocates of the "wise use" philosophy of natural resources. "To this man, President Clinton turned over large chunks of critical policy turf ... areas of government that intrude into every aspect of your daily life: the environment, energy, technology, information systems ..."

In his book, *Undue Influence*, Arnold writes about a Gore-led coalition of wealthy left-wing benefactors, his allies among the leadership of environmental groups and zealots who, with the vice president's help, have burrowed deep into the bureaucracy, to take control of the nation's natural resources policy and regulatory agencies.

In Arnold's view, the environmental movement is not a simplistic group of naive do-gooders, typified by young females who free lab animals and perch in treetops for forestall loggers, but something much more complex and malignant. Rather, the environmental movement "consists of an iron triangle of wealthy foundations, grant-driven environmental groups and zealous bureaucrats welded together in an undemocratic, elitist political coalition that control our future far more than the public believes ..."

"This handful of people with charitable tax-exemption influence public policy to destroy the lives of hundreds of thousands of goods producers," Arnold's book concludes. "They act behind a veil of secrecy. They lie about their actions. They were not elected. They are totally unaccountable ..."

One private, non-profit entity that has undertaken a Herculean task of forcing accountability on FWS, and which helped document many of the abuses enumerated above, is the National Wilderness Institute, a conservative natural resources watchdog group in Alexandria, Virginia, best known for its work on endangered species. Small and modestly funded, but tenacious, NWI led the pack in dragging out the truth, forcing FWS Director Clarke into the proverbial doghouse.

"We hadn't really worked with whistleblowers until the last couple of years," said NWI executive director Rob Gordon. "I think it's because the environmental regulatory agencies have been so radically mismanaged" under Clinton and Gore.

"It's way beyond what the career civil servants are used to," Gordon said. "Each administration comes in with its agenda and there's usually friction between careerists and political. But the degree of that friction, especially in the latter half of this administration, has been so intense that we are seeing a lot of very unhappy, very alarmed" career civil servants, "even people from the left ... telling us that management is engaged in radically illegal" activity.

"For example, we were told that 40 officials from one office were called together and told that it was considered a more serious offense to violate a superior's orders than to violate the law," Gordon said. The number of confidential informants who have made unsolicited calls to NWI to pass along information

about mismanagement and illegal activity at FWS "has increased 20-fold," he said.

In what has become a trademark strategy for an administration beset by scandal at every quarter, the FWS has stuck stubbornly to the mantra of admit nothing, deny everything, make ugly counter-charges against the accusers and stall, stall, stall.

For instance, among the 30 or so individual Freedom of Information Act requests filed by NWI in the last two years with FWS, one resulted in a response containing 40 pages of documents, with a cover letter implying that this was all the records available on that particular subject. Persisting with its investigation, NWI learned there were more related documents — about 50,000 more — pertaining to the request.

Dedicated Funds Become Slush Funds

Much of the NWI's scrutiny has centered on the FWS Federal Aid Division, which supposedly administers the redistribution of excise taxes collected from outdoors men. By law, FWS is supposed to keep only a minute percentage of the tax collected on the sales of ammunition, boat fuel, duck calls, tackle boxes and fishing lures; archery, reloading and trapping supplies; etc.

Under the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act, originally passed in 1937, and similar revenues generated by fishing-related sales under the Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration Act of 1950, the bulk of funds are mandated by law to be returned by FWS to state and local fish and game agencies, and qualified private conservation groups, to expand habitat and increase sport fish and game populations.

FWS, which dispenses grants through its Federal Aid Division, is allowed under the laws to deduct up to 8 percent of the excise taxes collected from anglers and 6 percent of the special revenues paid by hunters.

Over the decades, as the human population grew, so did the number of people hunting and fishing, dramatically increasing the amount of revenue withheld by FWS under the percentage formula, until it became a third of the FWS budget.

As one congressional investigator said, "You don't need more money to administer a program just because more money is there."

Therein were sewn the seeds of temptation that, under the administration of Bill Clinton, who has a proven weakness for temptation and easy money, bloomed into yet another scandal. As more and more millions piled up in the two trust funds, "it was like an open vault," the investigator said. "It was an invitation for the system to fail, and hunters and fishermen to be had."

The temptation was too great, and it "spawned a culture of permissive spending" of tax dollars earmarked to serve the outdoors men who pay the revenues, one GAO investigator testified to Congress. Unable to locate tens of thousands of budgetary documents required by law to be maintained by FWS, the GAO described the FWS Federal Aid program as "one of the worst managed programs we have ever encountered."

FWS bosses used these administrative funds to engage in some budgetary hocus-pocus. In a long-running shell game, funds obligated by law to benefit hunters and fishermen were diverted without congressional approval into accounts to fund pet projects of Al Gore and his environmental extremist buddies, such

as reintroduction of the gray wolf, just one reason given for why FWS staff made 79 trips to Canada in eight years.

One FWS manager, Bill Brooks, even referred to one of the illicit accounts in an e-mail read at one congressional hearing as "my slush fund."



(left) Rob Gordon, executive director of the National Wilderness Institute, pores over documents obtained by NWI under the Freedom of Information Act, which illustrate the reckless and bureaucratically arrogant abuses of tax funds obtained from hunters and fishermen by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. (right) Bonnie Kline did not know that, besides the congressional and GAO investigations of financial improprieties at FWS, the FBI was investigating whether high-level FWS officials illegally diverted almost \$400,000 of government funds, supposed to be partial payment for a proposed land purchase in Florida's Everglades that would allegedly benefit a wealthy Democratic Party contributor. When FWS bosses learned Kline was telling the truth, things got rough at work. A threatening note was left on her desk, her computer security access codes were changed without notice and e-mail tapes sought by FBI disappeared. After she testified to Congress it got worse.



Don't Badger A Badger

A few months later, "the roof fell in ... I was curtly told I would be moved to a non-existent, lower-grade job in Massachusetts ... I was locked out of my office, the police came to the building to keep me from entering and I was threatened in an unmarked envelope left at my front door on a Sunday morning with the loss of my retirement for five years and the loss of my health coverage forever if I did not retire immediately."

Beers did retire, but he didn't stay quiet. After gaining status from the Office of Independent Counsel as a bonafide whistleblower, Beers won a \$150,000 settlement and a letter of apology from the FWS. And he has been an instrumental and compelling witness in Congress, and prompted a new round of GAO scrutiny.

"Many of the problems we identified in our July 1999 testimony" before the House Committee on Resources "were the same as those we identified six years ago ... " said Barry T. Hill, of the GAO. "We found that the Service had not been entirely responsive to our earlier recommendations to correct the management problems we identified in our previous review.

"We are hopeful, but not confident, that the agency will be committed to implementing planned changes and that the changes will result in lasting improvement. Our lack of confidence is due to the Office of Federal Aid's poor track record in dealing with the identified problems."

After GAO investigators checked files on grants for fiscal years 1993 through 1998, Hill testified that the records were "incomplete, out of date and disorganized In many instances, we could not track and verify the status of a grant, the amounts authorized for payment, or the time periods in which these expenditures were made."

If You Can Smell It, You Can Spell It: C-O-R-R-U-P-T-I-O-N

What investigators *could* document, however, was not only outrageous, but also possibly illegal. For instance, the FWS used excise tax funds paid by sportsmen to pay for alcoholic beverages — a violation of federal regulations — and reimbursed the costs of single meals that were twice the daily limit allowed by law.

FWS employees made 107 trips to Venezuela, Mexico, Japan, Italy, France, the Netherlands, Brazil, New Zealand, Russia and England. Taxes paid by hunters and fishermen paid for a Federal Aid biologist, Carlos Diaz, to go to Puerto Rico, where he has relatives, 17 times in 18 months.

Enough Is Enough

The scandal came to light largely through the efforts of one man, James M. Beers, a wildlife biologist and career civil servant with 30 years of experience who was forced to retire after he refused to approve grants from Pittman-Robertson tax revenues to ineligible applicants, such as the Fund for Animals.

After Clinton and Gore took office, "I began to see indications of [FWS] developing duplicity" on the issue of trapping. The European Community had threatened to ban all fur imports from the U.S. if the federal government did not set up restrictions for leg-hold traps.

Beers, who began trapping when he was 7, was tasked to set up new trapping standards to satisfy the European markets, "a difficult challenge, but one that was worthwhile ... for the trappers, furriers and even hunters and fishermen who were also threatened by the animal rights activists who were driving the European fur ban," he testified to the House resources Committee, chaired by Republican Don Young of Alaska, also an NRA board member.

At the same time the Clinton Administration was assuring state game agencies, trappers and furriers of support, Beers testified that he was hearing from longtime FWS colleagues about "secret meetings between [FWS] and animal rights representatives to ... undercut our efforts."

Puerto Rico was also a popular spot for FWS bosses to hold meetings, travel documents confirm. By comparison, mainland states that generate much more in excise tax revenue and have many more registered hunters and fishermen were traveled to far less. Another popular meeting site: Atlantic City, N.J. You can bet that city generates little in excise taxes for FWS.

FWS bosses like Robert J. Sousa — a prolific vagabond — and Bob Lange, who got transferred to a plum job in the U.S. Forest Service after his abuses came to light — spent tens of thousands of tax dollars *paid by hunters and fishermen* for junkets to Tokyo, Rio de Janeiro and Amsterdam. Meanwhile, the funds available for legitimate wildlife conservation projects have dwindled, even as the sale of hunting and fishing equipment has increased.

In Wyoming, for example, a popular destination for fishing and hunting, the excise tax funds generated by those sales and returned to Wyoming's Game and Fish Department have declined sharply, from \$4.2 million in 1995, to \$2.7 million in fiscal 1998.

NWI director Gordon put it another perspective. To pay for Sousa's \$26,000 in travel costs to go to Japan and Brazil, "about 37,000 miles of fishing line had to be sold to generate enough excise taxes" for those trips, "enough to circle the Earth about 1 1/2 times."

Lange, Sousa's boss, spent \$32,000 of conservation fund on travel in 18 months, with approval for many of the trips signed by his subordinates, the GAO reported. Virtually none of the after-action reports required by Department of Interior regulations to explain and justify the travel were ever filed.

Victimizing The Innocent

Caught unaware and unprepared in the bureaucratic crossfire over the FWS financial scandal was Bonnie Kline, a computer security specialist and single mother of two who may be the biggest individual victim. Unlike Beers, she has gotten no settlement for the punishment heaped on her, only grief, harass-

ment, poverty and chronic stress.

Kline testified under oath before Young's committee about threats made to her by her bosses if she did not to hide or destroy e-mails sought by investigators — some of them sought by the FBI in a criminal probe.

Unaware of the ensuing panic among FWS officials over the escalating investigation, Kline was escorted by Lou Irwin and Bill Brooks, her first- and second-echelon supervisors, respectively, onto a balcony at the FWS headquarters in Arlington, Virginia. She was threatened with the loss of her job if she cooperated in any way with investigators.

Sitting the single mother of two down in a chair as they loomed over her, Kline said Brooks told her he had "just received something short of a subpoenae. If anybody comes to you, asking for tapes or copies of tapes, you are not to cooperate with any of them ... You report it immediately to me ... You do not understand how serious this situation is and I want you to stay out of it... I'm telling you to keep your mouth shut ... You're going to put your career in jeopardy if you mess with any of this."

"He told me if I went up against him, I would lose," she said in an interview. She said immediately after this conversation, Irwin called her in his office and offered her a job transfer and promotion, from a GS-11 to a GS-13. She demurred, saying she wanted to see a job description.

Kline, who had received numerous citations and cash awards for her work, did not know that, besides the congressional and GAO investigations of financial improprieties at FWS, the FBI was investigating whether high-level FWS officials illegally diverted almost \$400,000 of government funds, supposed to be partial payment for a proposed land purchase in Florida's Everglades that would allegedly benefit a wealthy Democratic Party contributor.

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SMALL SAMPLE OF THE CLINTON/GORE ECOLIGARCHY

NAME	GREEN GROUP	JOB with CLINTON/GORE
Bruce Babbitt	League of Conservation Voters	Secretary of the Interior
Robert Armstrong	Trust for Public Lands	Ass't. Secretary of Interior
George Frampton	Wilderness Society	Ass't. Sec. of Interior; Chair, Council on Environmental Quality
Donald Barry	World Wildlife Fund	Counsel to Director, Fish & Wildlife Service
Sue Lieberman	People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals	F&WS, Office of Scientific Authority
Jim Baca	Wilderness Society	(former) Director, Bureau of Land Mgt.
Carol Browner	Citizen Action	EPA administrator
J. Charles Fox	Friends of the Earth	Special Ass't. to Carol Browner

FORMER GORE STAFFERS IN JOBS THAT INFLUENCE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

Carol M. Browner: former Gore senate staffer and VP transition team who worked for Citizen Action; now administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

Kathleen McGinty: former Gore senate staffer appointed to chair the President's Council on Environmental Quality. Left that job to join husband Karl Hausker of the Center for Strategic and International Studies on an overseas assignment.

Arlie Schardt: national press secretary for the Gore presidential campaign of 1988, became executive director of the Environmental Defense Fund and now is president of Environmental Media Services.

SOME MEMBERS OF AL GORE'S INNER ADVISORY CIRCLE

Bill Richardson: Secretary of Energy, former U.N. Ambassador

Bruce Babbitt: Secretary of Interior, ex-president of the League of Conservation Voters

George Frampton: Director, Council on Environmental Quality; ex-president, Wilderness Society

Timothy Wirth: Now with Ted Turner's United Nations Foundation, the former U.S. senator from Colorado is an ex-State Department environmental official

Richard Holbrooke: Ambassador to the U.N., foreign policy guru for Gore's 1988 presidential campaign

James G. Speth: ex-EPA director and U.N. official, now dean of Yale's School of Environmental Studies

source for all: *Undue Influence* by Ron Arnold



Messerschmitt and Rowe were presented Colt Gold Cup .45 ACP pistols by Lt. General David E. Granger, Jr. (Ret.). The Best Ranger Competition also bears his name.

RANGERS

Who Led The Way

Grueling Competition For America's Best

by Doyle Keeton

Photos by Carol Keeton

It wasn't the challenge of marching and running over 60 miles, parachuting from helicopters, 18-mile road march with 60 pound rucksacks and weapons or even competing against 43 of the world's best two-man fighting teams in 60 non-stop hours of competition; the challenge each contestant faced was themselves.

The military's best Rangers came home to Fort Benning to test their skills during the David E. Granger, Jr. Best Ranger Competition, at Fort Benning, Georgia, this spring.

Most basic Ranger skills were incorporated into the contest. The competition opened with pushups, sit-ups and obstacle course, followed by an 8-mile run. The run's length wasn't revealed prior to, or during, the event. Contestants had to determine the best pace for

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Marine Gunnery Sgt. Keith Oakes (left), 5th Ranger Training Battalion, climbs a 70-foot rope during the Prusik Climb event of the Best Ranger Competition. Oakes, 37, was the oldest Ranger in competition. (below) Staff Sgt. Frank Rael 25th Infantry Division, waits and jumps from a Black Hawk helicopter during the spot-landing event of the Best Ranger Competition.





Disguised with enemy uniforms and Chinese weapons, Recon team West Virginia gained an edge in chance contacts. Team leader Ron

Knight, (back), and his assistant team leader Larry Kramer (front), survived one ambush purely because of their disguises.

Against All Odds

by Maj. John L. Plaster, USAR (Ret.)

Constantly outnumbered, hunted like animals, given no quarter by a deadly serious enemy, all of SOG's Special Forces recon teams should have vanished deep behind enemy lines in Laos and Cambodia. To counter the Studies and Observations Group's Green Beret recon teams — which were ambushing convoys, tapping phonelines, planting mines, and calling airstrikes on enemy targets — the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) massed more than 40,000 troops arrayed in layer upon layer of trackers, reaction forces, sentries and foot patrols, with 100-man companies scouring the jungle for these six-man teams.

How could anyone have prevailed in such a

dangerous environment, against such terrible odds? SOG's success began with the quality of its soldiers. Special Forces trainees had to pass a rigorous selection process, including the highest mental and physical standards of any army in the world. Then training culled out all but the best, yielding intelligent, highly motivated Green Berets who would rather die than quit. SOG's all-volunteer recon men came from among these remaining few. Dedicated to their mission and all-too-aware of its hazards, they trained constantly when they weren't in the field, refining and mastering tactics and techniques. There was a lesson learned, a rule, a reason, for everything they did — *everything*.

How SOG
Teams
Prevailed
Against the
North
Vietnamese

Some team leaders went further, outfitting their whole team in NVA clothes, weapons and gear despite the fact that the *Law of Land Warfare* authorizes executing such men as spies.

Counter-Tracking

Knowing that most Landing Zones in Laos and Cambodia were surveilled by enemy LZ Watchers, a wise team leader assumed from the moment he landed that the enemy was scouring for any sign of his team. To counter such LZ Watchers and trackers, recon teams “sterilized” their back trail to eliminate evidence of their passage. The assistant team leader, traveling at the rear of the column, picked up flotsam, re-intertwined foliage and obscured footprints, as well as created false trails.

Despite their best efforts, teams sometimes still picked up trackers. In that case, one solution was to leave behind mines, a quick process using the M-14 toe popper, which was slightly larger than a Copenhagen can.

Another counter-tracker tactic was button hooking — circling back to observe their own backtrail — then ambushing the trackers with a suppressed weapon. This works fine in the movies but if the enemy got off even one shot it disclosed the action to nearby NVA and the race was on.

Tracker dogs proved a bit more difficult. During WWII, British SOE employed a mixture of dried blood flakes and cocaine, which apparently worked well. The OSS used the “Dog Drag,” a large linen wick dragged behind an operative containing equal parts of Caproic Acid, I-valeric Acid and Castor Oil. After experimenting with various concoctions to confuse tracker dogs — red pepper, exotic fragrances — SOG teams settled upon CS tear gas powder which was carried in plastic bottles and shaken on the ground like talcum powder.

Disguising Their Tracks

Because enemy trackers would come running when U.S. jungle boot tracks were discovered, SOG devoted considerable effort to disguising boot soles. One novel solution, reputedly a CIA experiment, was outfitting jungle boots with human barefoot soles. But SOG men found the smooth “footprint” boots couldn’t grip, and lost authenticity with wear. Besides that, they were uncomfortable.

The next brainstorm was to replace the jungle boot’s Vibram soles with tire treads to resemble Ho Chi Minh sandals, as worn by the Viet Cong. But SOG wasn’t fighting VC — these were North

Vietnamese regulars, wearing sneaker-like Bata boots with their own distinct pattern. Therefore, CISO acquired similar Bata boots in Hong Kong which some teams wore despite their weak arches and reduced ankle support.

To reduce the U.S. bootprint’s distinctness, some teams pulled socks over their boots when traversing soft ground, but this had only limited application — and besides, socks wore out quickly, and still left a discernable though vague track.

An especially innovative twist came under Chief SOG, Colonel Steve Cavanaugh. Acquiring thousands of used U.S. jungle boots left at MASH hospitals by medevaced GI’s, SOG C-130s airdropped them over Laotian and Cambodian base areas in hopes some NVA would wear them and make the U.S. boot print commonplace. This proved successful, with recon teams observing NVA wearing jungle boots, and one recon team even bringing out a prisoner in U.S. boots.

Confusing The Enemy

Realizing that contact and a subsequent gunfight would occur during more than half their missions, recon team leaders looked at



courtesy Frank Greco

(right) This NVA prisoner, captured in Laos, is wearing U.S. jungle boots, proof that SOG’s airdrop program worked. (below) Human footprint boots, designed to fool trackers, did not work well in the field. (lower right) Dog repellent — to lose tracker dogs. Recon men laced backtrail with CS powder, carried in insect repellent bottle.



courtesy Leroy Thompson



courtesy author

ways to make the enemy hesitate to open fire during accidental or chance encounters, if only to gain a critical 10-second advantage.

Therefore, many SOG teams wore portions of enemy uniforms to confuse the NVA, forcing them to call out, *Ei Be Do!* — “Who goes there!” — allowing the SOG men to open fire first. Bob Graham’s entire team wore NVA pith helmets, while many other team leaders — myself included — attired their pointman in complete NVA uniform with AK and chest-style webgear.

Some team leaders went further, outfitting their whole team in NVA clothes, weapons and gear despite the fact that the *Law of Land Warfare* authorizes executing such men as spies. How concerned were they about losing Geneva Convention protections? RT West Virginia team leader, Sergeant First Class Ron Knight, never gave it much thought, observing, “We never got any [SOG MIAs] back anyhow so I reckon it didn’t make any difference.”

Stealth

SOG teams preferred to practice such perfect stealth that there was no contact. In a full day, a team often advanced only 500 yards — that’s just 50 yards per hour, which translates to one step per minute. During that minute, you scanned to front and sides; carefully eyeballed anyplace an enemy soldier might lurk; trained your CAR-15 at the spot contact might erupt; examined the ground where you’ll next place your foot; paused; smelled; listened; delicately pushed aside a vine with your left hand; tested the ground ahead with one toe; slowly shifted your weight to the forward foot; eased the vine behind you and ensured it didn’t catch on your rucksack or webgear; paused; listened; looked around again; lifted your trailing foot and gently brought it up to your other foot. You repeated this process hour after hour, immersed in tiny, deliberate actions, patient acts which so occupied your mind that there was nothing but the present.

Silence was their greatest virtue. During a five-day mission teammates spoke only in whispers but most often communicated by hand signals, facial expressions and body language, as our speechless ancestors must have done when hunting woolly mammoths. A nod, a click of the tongue, a raised eyebrow, a shrug, tipping or shaking or nodding a head, an inquiring glance.

And then there was instinct: When a SOG man “felt” something — danger, anticipation, hackles on your neck — he accepted it as a

Stopping was hazardous: A 30-second head start might mean a clean escape, while 10 seconds wasted could cause encirclement and annihilation.



courtesy Bob Graham

Recon Team Pick team leader, Bob Graham (center), confused NVA by disguising Montagnard pointman in enemy uniform (front, left), while others wore NVA pith helmets.

subconscious warning, the gut feeling that someone’s watching you, or you’re overwhelmed with foreboding about climbing a hill. Recon men learned to trust their instincts until they verged on superstition: Many a recon man *swore* the only reason a passing NVA spotted him was because he’d been staring at the NVA’s face.

RON Procedures

Like a rabbit hiding in a briar patch, at dusk a recon team squirmed into the thickest, thorniest foliage they could find, preferably on the side of a hill to make enemy night sweeps difficult to control. Called an “RON” or *Rest Over Night*, they laid so close they could touch each other, eight men in a space so small the NVA wouldn’t imagine they could be there. Campfires? *Absolutely never!* Teams ate cold rations. Your rucksack was your pillow and you slept in your webgear. Your CAR-15 was never beyond reach.

Before dark the team leader squatted beside each man to designate his share of the perimeter, describing where and if to throw grenades. Claymore mines were emplaced danger-close, just 5 meters away, on the reverse side of trees to absorb backblast. This way the claymore wire would not pinpoint them to NVA searchers. Relaxing at night meant death: Better to stay uneasy, alert, with the tiniest sound jolting you completely awake, your heart pounding.

By daylight they were packed and ready to go, sitting in an outward-looking circle, quietly eating rice, watching their claymores and waiting for the USAF Forward Air Controller’s morning radio check. Then they were on their way.

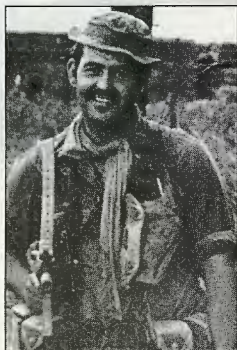
Evading Sweeps And Drives

SOG men learned how a hunted animal felt because that’s how the NVA scoured the countryside in search of them. Enemy signal shots, shouts and clapping hands were intended to instill panic, like Indian coolies beating pots and pans to drive a tiger into a waiting rifleman’s sights. Except the SOG men understood the game.

It demanded considerable tactical skill and good nerves to side-step whole platoons and companies beating the bushes for you. Some teams boldly charged the noisemakers, and shot their way through. When this worked it was brilliant; when it failed, it seemed

Desperate Men

Much to the chagrin of NVA commanders, SOG teams sometimes escaped because sheer desperation inspired risks that North Vietnamese soldiers simply would not match. For example, the NVA had learned from battle against American units in South Vietnam that they could prevent U.S. airstrikes by staying so close that the bombs would endanger the Americans. But being a fatalistic lot, the SOG teams called in the air anyhow — sometimes right across themselves — preferring to chance an accidental death from U.S. bombs rather than certain death from the NVA.



Ken “Shoe Box” Carpenter once found his team hotly pursued by NVA that kept driving them toward a cliff, where at last they seemed hopelessly pinned. The doomed Carpenter peeked over that Laotian precipice while the NVA formed for the assault. The “Shoe Box” and his teammates held hands and jumped into the treetops 30 feet below, crashing through foliage, bouncing violently between branches and spraining a few ankles, but they all hit the ground alive.

And not a single NVA cared to follow them. — J.L.P.

Continued on page 68

SIERRA LEONE THROUGH HIND SIGHTS



SOF Flies in the Gunner's Seat

Text & Photos by Al J. Venter, operating out of Cockerill Barracks, Freetown, Sierra Leone

THE rush of flying in the nose of the Mi-24 gunship can become addictive. During the first week of government strikes against the RUF rebels, I had been relegated to the back of the helicopter with the sidegunners.

Then came the attacks on Makeni, followed by the trip where Neall Ellis

("Nellis") took his Hind deep into the interior, almost as far north as the frontier with the Guinea Republic, and now I rode in the front. It was an eventful 150-minute flight and we were kept busy throughout: We made four strikes on rebel positions, with radio intercepts later indicating we had done



well. Riding in the nose, I was also able to see what an incredibly beautiful land this was: The interior of Sierra Leone is truly awesome in places, shaped, as some of the old-timers would say, by the hand of God.

The coastal plain was mostly flat. We followed the usual routine, moving low, usually at tree-top level to avoid enemy SAMs. Occasionally a cluster of forest giants would force us to climb. That done, we would revert to clipping the tops of palms once more.

Gradually the countryside tilted upwards

until undulating rows of foothills unfolded before us. Finally, Nellis took us over some of the most spectacular mountain topography in West Africa. I could only surmise that this was probably the sort of thing that originally fired the mind of Edgar Rice Burroughs when he wrote his first Tarzan book, although then he didn't have the opportunity to observe the splendor of this primeval continent from the air as we did.

The carpet of jungle in the north was verdant and almost unbroken, punctuated here and there by granite outcrops that tow-

ered over the jungle like obelisks. The rest was riverine and almost untouched by man. Of course, it was man that had spoiled it.

It took us about an hour's hard flying to get to Fadugu, a small town northwest of the Kono diamond fields. It's a long way to travel in a chopper since we cruised at about 160 mph. Once there, we went to work: Our side-gunner Hassan spotted a Land Rover with a 12.7mm anti-aircraft gun on its cab, parked near some buildings that had recently been repaired. Since this was RUF country, we took the bait.

It took Nellis three passes to neutralize



(left) Nellis' Hind homes in on village near Makeni, catching RUF high command with surprise rocket strike, as author photographs from gunner's seat. Fitted with 57mm rocket pods, the Mi-24 attack chopper can be a serious threat even to heavy targets.

the gun and the surrounding buildings, firing his 57mm rockets and the Gatling. Only on the final strike did the rig simply blow up as the gas tank ignited.

We continued north again and by now I had activated the IR jammer. Our pilot had warned that the place had seen a lot of action in the past, and the rebels were rumored to have heat-seekers.

Signs Of War

It was clear from what we could see as we passed, that many of the small towns had been affected by the war: There were damaged buildings everywhere, some of them gutted and roofless. It was sad, because Sierra Leone had once been the pride of Britain's Colonial empire in west Africa and the local ruling class had been kind to it.

Though Nellis rarely follows any set routine — one of the reasons, perhaps, why he is still alive — we kept close to the road, a fine one, tarred and obviously well-maintained. There was good reason. In several places we could see that logs had been placed haphazardly across the tarmac, the classic rebel ambush tactic, used in Angola, El Salvador, Malaya and elsewhere since the guerrilla concept first

took root in the modern period.

Five or six minutes out of Fadugu, he spotted what he had been looking for. There were more logs in the road, but this time there was also an enemy ambush element in place. As he explained later, they were probably waiting for a convoy from one of the government camps to their north. For them, the trouble just then, was that though they might have been ready for an attack, they were all facing the wrong way.

Surprise!

As we were flying low, they hadn't heard us coming up. As we peaked over one of the hills, it was too late: The forest had very effectively muffled our engines. The gooks scattered and rocket and Gatling fire



followed, setting many of the grass-roofed buildings alight. We had no fear of hitting innocents: The entire area had long ago been wasted by the rebels and almost all the locals had fled.

On the way back, passing over Kamakwie — the largest town across our flight path — it was Hassan who saw a pair of trucks parked under a tree near the center of town. Over the intercom, he gave Nellis specifics: "Look to the right of the local mosque — a large structure with four or five minarets," he called. The target was about 100 yards to its immediate south, he said.

The vehicles we were after had been only partially camouflaged. Still, they were difficult to spot until we were almost on top, which underscores one man's theory about insurgency: Scouting for the enemy in diffi-



Rockets on the way: Nellis fires up a Land Rover belonging to the RUF regional commander, which mounted a 12.7 on the cab. *Gotcha!* A direct hit and the vehicle explodes in flames. (left) Gunner's seat gave SOF bird's-eye view of the action.



Rockets slam into Makeni, the regional RUF headquarters in the north.



Two buildings, which intelligence indicated were regional RUF HQ, were fired up with rockets. Later radio intercepts indicated they were badly damaged.

cult terrain is a craft at which you get better the longer you do it.

In pulling up sharply, we were suddenly presented with something else: a large, blue, spanking-new five-tonner parked casually just outside town — no camouflage or protection. Nothing. Out of rockets by now, Nellis revved it with the Gatling, most of the hard stuff going into the engine.

Being rainy season, we cut across the paths of a succession of tropical storms that rolled ominously across the land, avoiding banks of cumulus-nimbus on both sides as we flew. The sky was black all round them and punctured by lightning strikes.

If a storm did catch us, the Hind would leak like an old kettle, even though we were supposed to be inside a sealed cockpit. Nellis would adjust the pressure a little and the leaks would ease off, though my Nikon's lightmeter gave up soon afterwards: It simply couldn't handle the humidity. So much for Russian engineering precision.

Water In Hind Sight

Although many of the gunship's gauges around me in the front had a thin film of damp under the glass, Nellis laughed it off. I felt sure that it must ultimately affect the helicopter's operational parameters and afterwards said so. As it was, not all the instruments worked.

But then, as he said, "Russian weapons systems are designed to incorporate snafus," and I guess he was right.

Our last action that afternoon before we headed back, by now running short of fuel, was a defensive gook position at the head of one of the diamond pans that suddenly appeared out of nowhere. The guys working it had probably heard us coming and most of them took cover in a clump of palms: But not before we saw the last of them scampering like rabbits for safety.

Hassan dealt with the problem, telling us afterwards that one of the rebels had done an involuntary back-flip when he hit him with the GPMG: He went one way, he said, and his AK the other.

This war is full of surprises. It was on the way in that we came upon a gathering of RUF forces in a small town north of Port Loko. There were half-a-dozen vehicles clustered about a bunch of palms, many of them with anti-aircraft guns on the back. We could only look as we sped past, our avgas limitations, just then, precluding an attack.

It would have been the jackpot if we could have gone in, said Nellis afterwards, and he was right. That same night a large force — probably the same group that we had seen there at Gbinti — struck at a government position about 8 or 10 miles farther south. Pity, that.

When we got back to Cockerill after first picking up half a dozen senior field commanders at Port Loko, Nellis had less than five minutes fuel left in the tanks. Also, our portside drop tank had two neat holes — only a couple of feet from the muzzle-blast of Hassan's door gun.

Earlier in the week, the Sierra Leone High Command ordered an attack on Makeni. Until I had gone north, that mission had been the highlight of my in-country exploits. A week before, Makeni had been the headquarters of the rebel Revolutionary United Front (RUF), but facing the possibility of an assault by government forces, they had evacuated just about everything to Kono.

At The Leading Edge

This would be the first time that I would travel in the gunner's cockpit in the front of the helicopter and, I confess, I liked it. The common configuration of many of today's gunships — such as the U.S. Apache or the Italian Mangusta — is that the two-man flight crew sits in tandem, the gunner in a position just ahead of, and slightly below that of the pilot. Once installed — cramped

but comfortable in the nose, with a small fan blowing directly into my face — my feet almost nudged the Hind's 12.7mm four-barreled Gatling. It roared like a giant, unmuffled truck engine each time Nellis fired it.

From where I sat, I had an eagle's-eye view of the countryside below, extending in an arc of slightly more than 180 degrees. My helmet prevented me from peering around too far. In any event, it wasn't necessary since one of my jobs was to spot for enemy fire and movement, especially anything that might be sent up at us by the rebels. This was vital, because operating without back-up or cover, our evasive and retaliatory action needed to be prompt.

While the Hind's cockpit is enclosed in a titanium armor-plate capsule, it is not immune to heavier calibers such as 12.7mm and 14.5mm anti-aircraft fire, both of them favorites from the old Soviet arsenal. The



A mutilation is forever: Sankoh's RUF routinely hacks off the hands off innocent noncombatants to drive them out of diamond-rich areas. This baby girl was only two months old when RUF terrorists axed her arms. International aid officials have established a camp for Sierra Leonian amputees; Here a Swiss volunteer works on a prosthesis. What's a diamond worth, Mr. Desaeleer?



rebels have a lot of both, together with a sprinkling of the more deadly quad-barreled ZSU-23/24 whose muzzle emits a brilliant, Christmas-tree shaped flame that is 8 feet long each time it is fired.

What we search for while operational was not only the signature of tracers headed our way, but also tell-tale muzzle-blasts on the ground. The pink, 6-foot long, pencil-thin sheet of flame emitted by the 14.5mm anti-aircraft gun, for instance, is unmistakable.

Qaddafi — Again

Significant about this African campaign, is that recent intelligence reports indicate that Libya's Qaddafi is involved on the side of the rebels, and has supplied most of the weapons deployed by the RUF. We were also aware that they had been given a supply of SAM-7 ground-to-air missiles. In the past few weeks, this had placed the war in Sierra Leone in an altogether different category.

Interestingly, most of this hardware comes into Liberia after being transhipped at Ouagadougou Airport in Burkina Faso. The State Department and every American intelligence agency knows about it, but apart from posturing and platitudes at the UN, very little is done. Burkina Faso still gets U.S. foreign aid and so does Liberia.

Nellis, now conscious of the SAM threat, has tailored his tactics accordingly. As he says, it is notable that during Moscow's war in Afghanistan, many of the Russian Mi-24s destroyed by the *Mujahadeen* were shot down by them.

Our strike on Makeni on that day, however, was different. Once over the operational area, my role in the front cockpit was threefold: My first job onboard was to activate the circuit-breaker that armed our weapons. Then I needed to hang tight and, in a flash if necessary, activate the anti-missile jamming equipment.

Last, in the event of a stoppage on the Gatling, the weapon had to be recocked by a booster cartridge specially fitted for the purpose: There were three settings, in all. It didn't help that all the instructions on the instrument panel were in Cyrillic script.

Once we had refueled at Lungi we headed for the interior, going in low and passing within hailing distance of one of the partially sunk car ferries that the rebels destroyed last time 'round. The jungle that whizzed past below was verdant: It was both awesomely beautiful and, frankly, intimidating.

There were times when we flew so close to the triple-canopied tropical paradise that I felt that I could have stuck my hand out and touched it.

Desolate Jungle

From what we could see, there was very little movement in the bush and certainly few signs of life: no people, no huts, no domestic animals. Nothing. Undoubtedly the creatures of forest were all there within their dank, damp, distant world but, by now, they were probably wary of things that flew and occasionally spewed fire.

In places, the jungle seemed impenetrable: God knows, I speculated often enough what we would do if we were forced down and I always flew with a sup-

ply of water purifying tablets in case we had to walk to Guinea.

It was reassuring that three British and one New Zealand Army officers — members of the UN monitoring team in Sierra Leone — had only a couple of weeks earlier trudged through some of the most difficult swamp and bush country to reach government lines. They had escaped late one night from the rebel HQ in Makeni and headed directly south.

It took them four days to cover the 50 miles, moving only after dark and hiding up during daylight hours because the rebels were looking for them. It's astonishing what the human body can take when it has to. Most of the time they had only scorpions and things that slither for company, and they drank their water untreated from the swamps.

This West African jungle can be grim. SAS veteran Fred Marafono — Neall's partner — has experienced some of the harshest tropics anywhere. During the course of a 22-year military career, this Fijian national was posted to just about everywhere, including the forests of South and Central America as well as some of the most inhospitable places on earth adjacent to Indonesia. In contrast, he terms west Africa's jungles as the most unforgiving.

"Impossible for us and impossible for them," he told me. The only way to really move about Sierra Leone is on established roads or tracks, said the man to whom the Queen awarded an OBE (Order of the British Empire) for his role in the Iranian Embassy hostage drama in London a few years back.

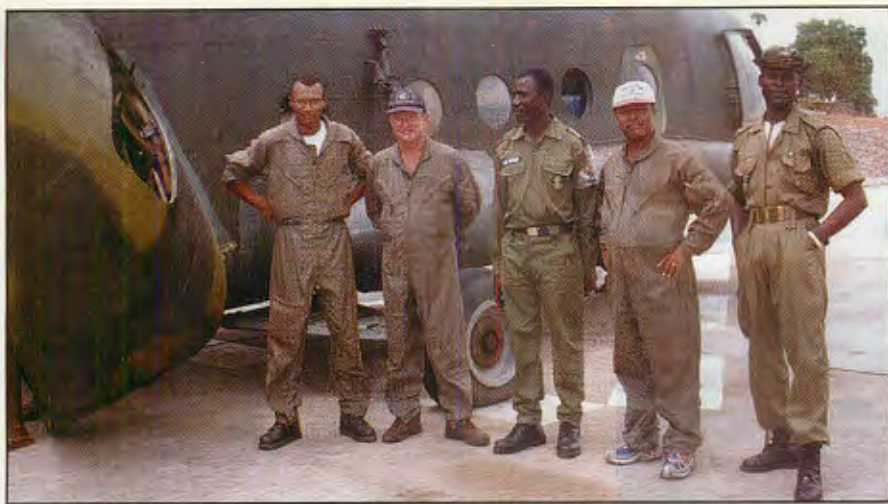
Lunsar Landing

The final stage of this flight took us first to Rogberi Junction which, despite its notoriety in the world press, was really little more than a couple of shacks along a rough road leading into the interior. We found it manned by UN



Battle-scarred and leaking fuel tank, not far from muzzle blast of door guns, was just one of those things that comes with the territory. (below) Nellis' Hind is refueled at Kenema, south of the diamond fields. Nellis and his gunship continue to do yeoman's work as we go to press.





Neall (second from left) and his international crew, including part-time Irish gunner (at his right) and Ethiopian flight engineer, second from right. (below) Fred Marafuno, former British SAS, flying as gunner aboard the Hind.

troops who waved as we passed. From there we flew to Lunsar, which had been captured by the Sierra Leone Army the day before and which government forces were to abandon again before the week was over.

Lunsar is the site of a long-abandoned iron ore mine, dominated by two large hills to its immediate south. There was evidence of troops about but nobody had yet claimed the heights, which I thought odd. The rebels only had to lug a 12.7 up that hill then could easily have used it to retake the town.

This seems to be one of many shortcomings that are symptomatic of this conflict: The most obvious military options are often overlooked, and both sides appear to be equally guilty. Also, nobody thinks further than today, which is why Sierra Leone's ammunition supplies suddenly dried up.

Right now, the rebels seem to have the edge, indicating the presence of foreign mercenaries — including some South Africans lured by the promise of diamonds. After losing Lunsar for the second time, I could sense the unease in the streets of Freetown.

Once past Lunsar we were into injun country. Within minutes we spotted two of the United Nations APCs that had been captured by the rebels a month previously. They were abandoned, probably for lack of gas. Using tree branches and shrubs, a half-hearted attempt had been made to camouflage them, but their white-painted frames stuck out against the undergrowth like a banner. Their automatic weapons had been removed.

There were perhaps six or eight villages along the road leading to Makeni and, as before, no visible signs of life.

Firing Up The RUF

Once we spotted a cluster of huts with a little smoke. Since it was a communal fire and symptomatic of the way that the rebels operate (in peace time, each hut would have its own fire), we gave it a rev. Our sidegunners reported moments later that there were gooks on the hop out of some of the adja-



cent buildings and heading into a clump of nearby forest. We spun about and rocketed that as well. Meanwhile, we watched carefully for incoming.

Priority of the day was Makeni and its reported regional RUF headquarters. While most of the rebel top brass had decamped, intelligence reports indicated that there was still some heavy stuff about, including SAMs. Nellis' mission was to hit a cluster of two-story buildings near the center of town which the rebels had commandeered.

By West African standards, Makeni is quite a big place, a mile or two across and bigger than I expected. It had been very well laid out in the old British Colonial tradition, with trees everywhere. The place had an ordered focus about it, coming together towards the center, which 40 years of independence had done nothing to degrade. Also, like Lunsar, its skyline was dominated by a tall communication mast and a succession of low hills on the outskirts of town. One of these sported a rebel flag, which Hassan quickly used for target practice.

There was something else that bothered us. From where we were flying, we were aware that the town lay only 20 miles from Mile 91 and the Malal Hills where SOF's Bob MacKenzie had been killed five years before.

Having done a recce, Nellis set about business. He climbed to about 800 feet before swinging the nose down and hard left towards the two-story target in the middle of town. Once in line, the whoosh of a rocket salvo followed.

We should have completed the job with the Gatling but it jammed. I juggled half a dozen switches. Still nothing happened. Neall cursed loud enough to hurt. Undeterred, he climbed again, swung the machine around and went in. By now my mouth was dry.

It was while coming out of our dives that I felt the most vulnerable. That and the tight turns when the world below would go by very slowly, and we, no doubt, presented the enemy with a slow-moving target in the sky.

... And Their Toys

Just then, Hassan reacted. "Trucks," screamed the sidegunner over the intercom and gave us a bearing. Once our nose had swung round again and Nellis gained a bit of height, I spotted a motor pool below. There were about five or six vehicles, including a BRDM-60 armored personnel carrier and a 10-tonner parked in the shadow of a large building not very far from the HQ structure. Almost all of them were painted white: more captured UN hardware!

While Nellis' previous salvos might have been slightly off the mark because of the extent of the target areas, his rockets this time went home. Before I could assess damage, he had taken the chopper up and away to the right. This was no place to linger.

We struck once more in Makeni and then it was time to head for home. As I admitted afterwards at Alex's Bar in Aberdeen over a beer, I was never more glad to have Makeni at my rear.

What was peculiar on this occasion was that the enemy didn't react to our presence, which is perhaps indicative of the success of Nellis' systematic search-and-destroy tactics. Only the day before he had managed to knock out a truck on a stretch of open road with a 12.7mm gun on the back as it was preparing to fire: It was really a question of who shot first and, of course, nobody has had as much practice in this sort of game as Nellis.

Going back by a different route, we saw a few locals this time, some washing clothes by a stream and, on another occasion, a family tilling a crop who rather pointedly ignored us. They were clearly fearful of being targeted. But as Nellis will tell you, you can very quickly tell who is a gook and who isn't.

By the time we got back to Lungi to refuel, the floor at the back was an inch deep in spent brass.

Al J. Venter is SOF's contributing editor for Africa. ✕

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Counter-Cocaine Cops

Continued from page 42

collected taxes on all the coca that was grown and processed in the area. But paramilitary squads launched a massive surprise attack last April, pushing the guerrillas they didn't kill deep into the jungle or up the Catatumbo River into Venezuela. Then they killed or evicted farmers and residents suspected of being guerrilla sympathizers.

The paramilitary incursion in April left 21 people dead in Tibu, the township that includes La Gabarra. Massacres in August 1999 killed at least 51 people and caused nearly 3,000 frightened villagers to flee into Venezuela. Protests by human rights groups over the August massacre forced the Pastrana government to send in 500 soldiers and a National Police unit. The soldiers left in April, leaving behind 80 police officers who patrol La Gabarra's dirt streets twice a day. Even with the National Police in town autodefensas in civilian clothes and 9mm pistols in their waistbands swagger through the streets.

Their identities are known to most La Gabarra residents. Yet the police can do little to stop them, since they provide the only protection against the guerrillas who control the jungle and wish to reclaim La Gabarra for their own. "We're either waiting for the next guerrilla attack or for the next massacre (by the autodefensas)," said one officer who requested anonymity. "There is tension here all day and all night." Like I said, La Gabarra is not a quiet, peaceful place to live.

As the day came to close I climbed aboard a Black Hawk for the ride back to Tibu and eventually to Bogota. With the approaching dusk the CNP combat troops abandoned La Gabarra to the autodefensas and the nominal control of police Captain Cartiblanca. According to the day's end statistics the police destroyed 87 drug labs and captured 21 people. One report claimed the CNP had discovered 150 drug labs. In an 11-day operation, the police raids destroyed 120 drug chagras and sprayed 3,700 of the area's estimated 25,000 acres of coca.

It will also hurt the local economy, which is almost wholly dependent on coca production. "Catatumbo, another Putumayo?" read the headline in the next day's edition of Bogota's El Spectator. The Putumayo River region near the frontiers of Peru and Ecuador is considered one of the "hot" areas of operations in Colombia. As I folded the newspaper and settled back into the web seat of the Colombian Air Force transport, I was already on my way there.

Senior Foreign Correspondent Rob Krott is a former U.S. Army officer and a graduate of the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, Glynco, GA. He has reported from the world's war zones for SOF since 1990. ✉

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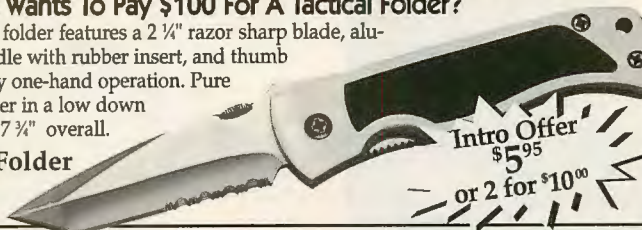
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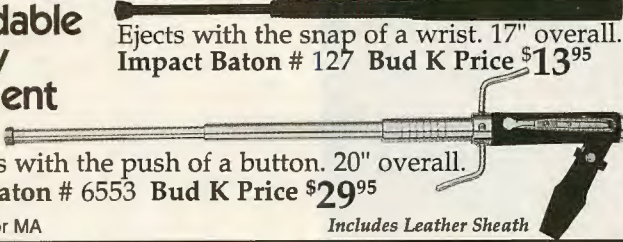


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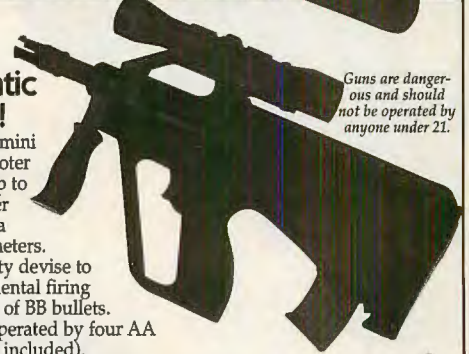
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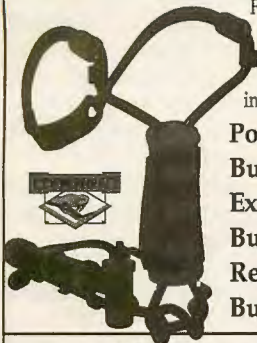
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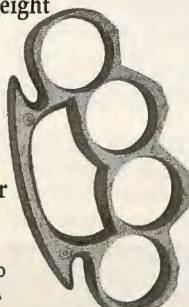
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Against All Odds

Continued from page 59

the height of stupidity. Some tricks worked only by virtue of the team or team leader performing them; when another team attempted the identical technique it failed and men died.

Contact

A talented team leader anticipated enemy contact and mentally rehearsed his reactions, constantly revising contingencies to fit shifting circumstances: If we're hit right now, where's the nearest LZ? What do I do if we take fire from uphill versus downhill? If there's a trail atop this hill, are we far enough below the crest that passing NVA won't hear us? Where's the nearest defensible terrain? *Upon contact, the team was executing their leader's plan while the enemy was only reacting.*

When he could see contact was inevitable, the team leader had his men initiate it — no matter how badly he was outnumbered — because he knew the first blow was critical. Bloody the enemy's nose and run like hell! In heavily occupied areas, ten minutes after a chance contact a 100-man, company-size Reaction Force arrived, reinforced by another company in a half-hour, and the enemy kept piling more on.

Typically, a recon team dashed about 200 yards through thick jungle, then slowed into evasive movement to shake off pursuers. The tradeoff was speed for sign: If they moved quickly they might gain distance but they left a more detectable trail. Usually evasion was preferable to an outright foot race because the numerically superior enemy carried less gear and could outrun the team or relay word ahead via radio and signal shots. Stopping was hazardous: A 30-second head start might mean a clean escape, while 10 seconds wasted could cause encirclement and annihilation.

When a team couldn't move fast or far due to wounded men, they seized the best defensible terrain, stacked magazines and fought it out. Hopefully this was beside an LZ so they could be extracted as quickly as A-1 Skyraiders and Cobra gunships pushed back the enemy. But the team had to get out soon or the NVA would rush in hordes of troops, ring the area with anti-aircraft guns, and the odds shifted from quality to quantity, with only one deadly result.

Yes, SOG's clever tactics and techniques allowed most recon teams to prevail even in the most desperate of circumstances, but appreciate the great danger of trespassing behind a determined enemy's lines: Between 1966 and 1971, ten SOG recon teams completely vanished, while another 14 teams were overrun and destroyed.

(This article is derived from Maj. Plaster's newest book, *SOG: A Photo History of the Secret Wars*, available through Paladin Press, or Maj. Plaster's website, www.ultimatesniper.com.)

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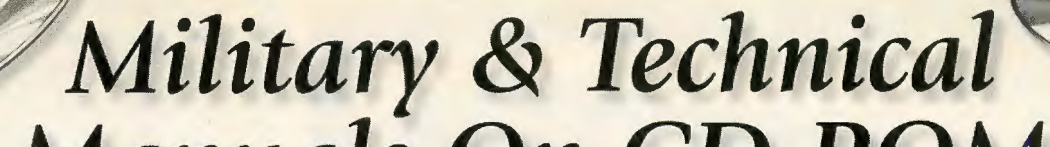
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their team without regard to distance.

A spot-parachute jump from a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter was next, followed by a 2.7 mile run with weapons and 60-pound rucksacks to the firing ranges where they shot rifles, 9mm pistols and M240 GPMGs.

An 18-mile, 60-pound rucksack road march, called "Midnight Massacre" by contestants, started at 2100 hours and ended at 0300. This was the competition's eliminator event.

Ranger Night Stakes continued throughout the night. By morning, with more than half of the course remaining, only 27 exhausted teams remained.

After running a bayonet assault course, the Ranger Day Stakes commenced with several groups of teams tackling the M18A1 claymore mine course, hand grenade course, weapons assembly, and a move under direct fire with MILES gear, range estimation, military knots and Prusik Climb.

The Prusik Climb is the most exciting and physically challenging event of the Day Stakes. Assembling a climbing rig from ropes, the Rangers climb a 70-foot tower and rappel down the opposite side.

Through most of the competition, the competition's oldest Ranger, 37-year-old Marine Gunnery Sergeant Keith Oakes, and his teammate, Captain Jason Rowe, both from the 5th Ranger Training Battalion, set the pace.

Oakes and Rowe were leading as the contestants faced the difficult night land navigation course. However, the 26-year-old 2nd Lieutenants Marc Messerschmitt and Rick Ahern, from Fort Jackson, U.S. Army Student Detachment, jumped into second place after winning the navigation course. The team then grabbed first place overall after winning another first in the 1-mile Darby Queen obstacle course.

However, the lead slipped away from Messerschmitt and Ahern when Staff Sgt. Glen Smith and Sgt. Colin Boley from Fort Benning's 75th Ranger Regiment took over first spot during the helocast. After jumping from 30 feet into Victory Pond, the Rangers swam several hundred yards with rucksacks and weapons.

During the helocast event, Oakes and Rowe dropped to third place when their poncho raft broke apart during their jump from the Black Hawk. Not to be denied the win, Messerschmitt and Ahern gave everything they had left in the final event, the 2.3-mile buddy run, to win the title of the U.S. military's "Best Rangers."

Messerschmitt said that this would be the last time they would compete in the competition. "We are just getting too old for this," Messerschmitt told Fort Benning's newspaper, *The Bayonet*. "This is just making us too old, too quick."

Doyle Keeton, from Wichita Falls, Texas, is a freelance writer who specializes in adventure sports, news and the military.

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Continued from page 55

FBI agents were seeking e-mails in which this alleged funds diversion was discussed. The supervisor who threatened Kline had himself signed an affidavit stating that e-mail backups were only kept for three months. When she was later contacted by an investigator from the Office of Special Counsel, she told the truth. Old e-mail tapes went back at least 18 months. She signed an affidavit to that effect.

The Thugs Must Be Scared

What happened next to Kline can't help but remind one of the ongoing investigation of more than 100,000 missing White House e-mail messages, which were hidden from congressional investigators and later disappeared. When FBI agents looking into allegedly illegal fund-raising by Al Gore, White House computer technicians, like Kline, said they were threatened with serious retribution if they told the truth.

When FSW bosses learned that Kline was telling the truth, they conjured up an extremely hostile work environment for her, one in which she was publicly ridiculed and humiliated. A threatening note was left on her desk after her lawyers wrote her bosses. Her computer security access codes were changed without notice

and the e-mail tapes disappeared.

After Kline testified in Congress about FWS wrongdoing, including an incident in which Irwin allegedly told her to erase the e-mail tapes with a magnet — something he later admitted in a sworn deposition — the hostility got even worse. One colleague even threw a phone that almost hit her head, and then went unpunished.

Kline's sense of well-being in the workplace was so understandably shaken, she could no longer come to work. Her doctor told her that job-related stress was so severe that it resulted in a condition in which her body's natural defenses against disease were suppressed to a dangerously low level.

The Administration Of Hypocrisy

After two letters of reprimand, FWS thrust Kline into a legal limbo in which she doesn't get paid, but hasn't been fired and consequently can't get another job. All because she cooperated with Congress, and a criminal probe by the FBI and the Office of Special Counsel (OSC). Her two kids, both straight-A students, don't understand why they may have to move out of their Northern Virginia townhouse, or why their perpetually nervous mom has to get loans from friends and family just to put food on the table.

Meanwhile, the Clinton/Gore administration, which holds itself out as a protector and advocate of the oppressed, and especially poverty-stricken single mothers, lets Kline twist alone in a cold wind of bureaucratic

indifference. Despite a finding in her favor by an administrative law judge, the Department of Interior's Inspector General and DOI's special counsel have ruled her complaint lacks merit and ordered her back to work, something her doctor says could be fatal.

Young's committee subpoenaed her records from FWS, but with Kline's testimony complete, seems to have lost interest in her case.

In the politically correct world of Bill Clinton and Al Gore, people are expendable, especially those who in any way oppose their vision of environmental utopia. In that quest, there is no misconduct that can't be excused, no lies and intimidation that can't be explained away.

And in that quest, the destruction of Bonnie Kline's career will hang like a lynched innocent, a tortured example of what happens to employees who choose right over wrong, truth instead of official story. The specter of her empty desk will remind other employees possibly inclined toward truth and justice to keep quiet and stay in line, intimidated and subjugated.

And over the shattered ruins of so many Bonnie Klines, Al Gore, leading his legions of eco-Nazis, may ultimately step up to the White House, sure of himself and unafraid, achieving at last his stilted totalitarian vision of *Earth in the Balance*.

Former Contributing Editor James L. Pate is a frequent contributor to SOF. ✕

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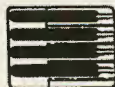
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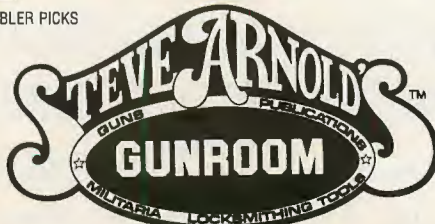


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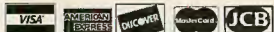
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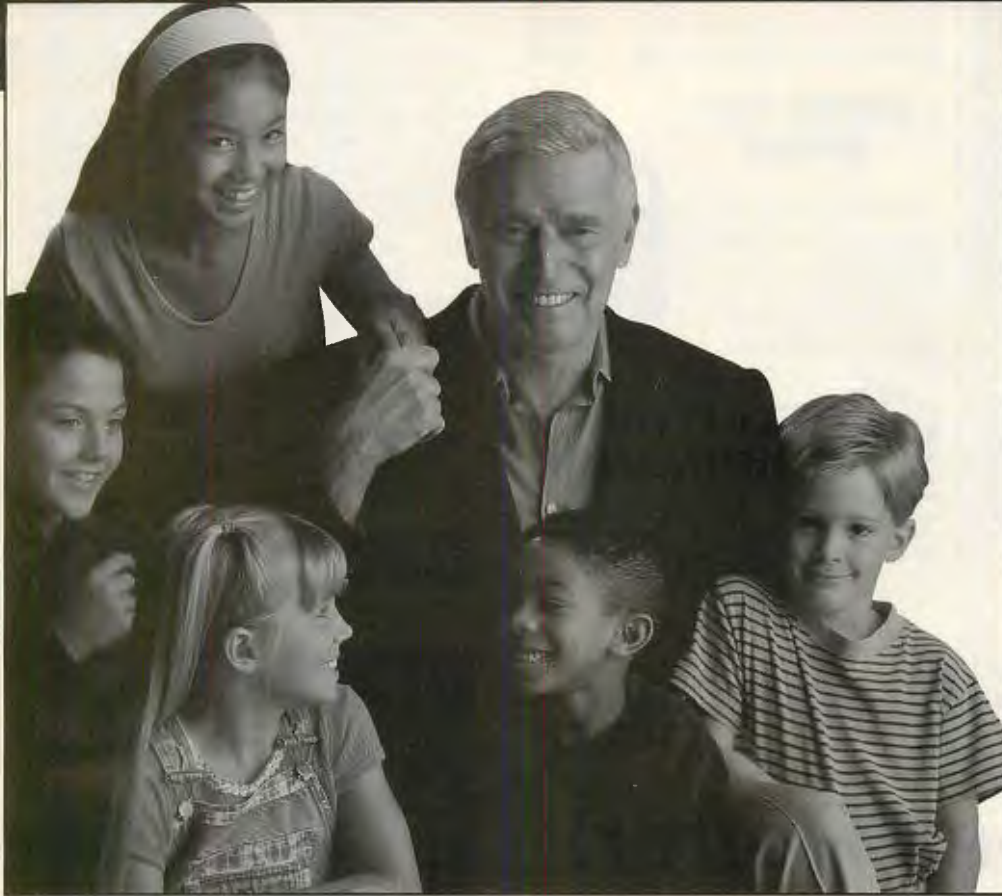
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The Marlin 1894P

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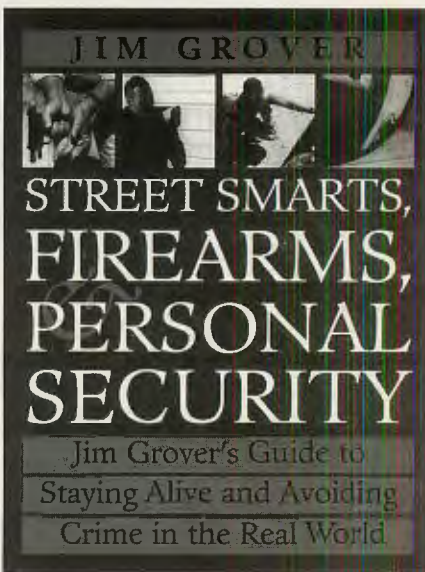
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Jim Grover's Videos

Continued from page 51



doesn't belong on every *SOF* readers bookshelf, it should be in every *SOF* readers hand — worn out from being read over and over. The subtitle says it all: "Staying Alive and Avoiding Crime in the Real World." A compilation of Jim's columns, this book will keep you from having to use all the techniques in Jim's video series. Learn how to live a "stealth existence" in today's harsh world, so you are not singled out in random crime. Evaluate the security of your home, the way you travel, the way you live. Grover's advice on gear, garb and prevention is derived from what he has personally seen work here and abroad.

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Letters From Africa

Continued from page 43

gusting acts of violence and torture against both his human opponents and their animals. Violence and terrorism are the only arguments he knows.

What shatters most South Africans is that he receives such all-out support from our own precious Mr. Mbeki, Mugabe's ideological twin and an overeducated idiot. In his May Day speech Mbeki made it plain that he fully supports Mugabe's farm invasions, warning that SA [South African] Whites can expect much of the same if they do not toe his line. What is widely forgotten is that since the ANC/SACP took power in 1994, some 680 White SA farmers have been murdered, often in the most horrible circumstances. Very little indeed is done about this by the police or anyone else.

In case any White is still under any illusions about ANC/SACP intentions, in their May Day addresses COSATU (the Marxist-led Congress of Trade Unions) speakers urged their eager mobs that "... you must intensively and actively hate capitalism and engage on all sides to destroy it." The message? For "capitalism," read Whites. A great message to send out to urgently needed international investors, not to mention highly apprehensive SA Whites.

The grim irony of all this is that conceivably 25% of all SA Blacks could be dead or dying by 2003/4, from AIDS/TB, malaria and a vast variety of other exotic diseases. Actually, the numbers will be far higher. The "government," if you can so describe it, sticks rigidly to the claim that there are about 1.4 million "illegals" in the country. Absolute nonsense. Any careful examination of satellite photos of the gigantic squatter camps now surrounding Johannesburg and every other town and city in the country, many of them extending 50 miles or more deep into the surrounding countryside, will soon convince you that they house tens of millions of people. Some experts claim as many as 41 million. And, remember, there were no squatter camps in SA before 1990.

What a dynamite factory the country has become. With the inevitable result. Every international flight out carries away more Whites, Indians, Coloureds and even Blacks, most of them never to return. So much for the great "diplomatic miracle" achieved in 1990. It would not be so bad had Rhodesia and SA been handed over to even semi-civilized people. But as should be now clear to all, that did not happen. We were handed over to savages. Alas.

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Continued from page 24

Fortunately, the nitrate residue is highly soluble and responds well to lots of hot soapy water, but the carbon build up — especially in cannon — can resist even hot soapy water. Carburetor cleaner works, but it's death on synthetic parts and wood finishes. KG's step 1 product is a carbon remover, and it is especially effective on black powder: Swab it on, let it soak, and wipe it and the carbon away. It really does the trick, especially around cannon vents and the lockwork on muzzle-loaders which tend to build up harder carbon. And carbon build-ups can keep a spark, making it very exciting when you load the next round.

But it's not just for muzzle-loaders, as not just muzzle-loaders build up carbon. We've never seen anything like the gas-cylinder lock on a Garand for building up hard carbon deposits, and with a longer soak, the KG-1 loosened it so it would brush away, no scraping required. It also did a yeoman's job cleaning up the crap left behind when 7.62 blanks are fired. Good stuff. It might even clean up dirty liberal political machines.

KG-2 is the follow-on product for removing lead or copper deposits in the bore. Most of the older ones used ammonium carbonate, or some other form of ammonia, to dissolve copper fouling, and this was offensive to work with and hard on finishes, as well. KG-2 is not, and it does a superlative job of keeping a new bore like new. KG-2 was originally developed to maintain bore integrity in sniper rifles, and it works well to fire-lap a new bore. It's a wipe-on, wipe-off product, with scrubbing not necessary unless it makes you feel better.

After KG-2 has removed any metallic deposits, KG-3 solvent and degreaser will remove any trace of it and the KG-1. The final step is to apply KG-4 lubricant a preservative for lasting protection. The KG-3 solvent and degreaser also serves admirably to remove lubricants or preservatives from the bore before shooting. Coming in a handy spray can with a tube to put it only where you need it, the KG-3 proved to be a real can-do cleaner for cosmoline (as in, one shot and wipe), and even some varnish-hard hundred-year-old grease of unknown composition on an old Martini rifle.

The KG Systems family of gun products also includes trigger lube, bullet lube and various Teflon-based dry lubricants. Long supplied to the U.S. military, KG's KG-4 gun oil was tested by the South African Defense Force on their Ma Deuces, and stoppages due to heat or fouling went from 750-1,000 rounds to more than 6,000 rounds.

For more information or to order, contact KG Industries, Dept. SOF, 537 Louis Drive, Newbury Park, CA 91320; phone: 800-348-9558; fax: 805-499-43372; or check out their website at www.kgproducts.net.

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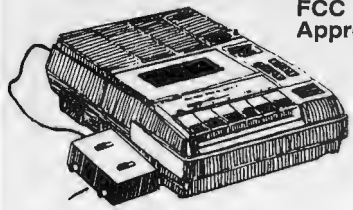
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by Col. David H. Hackworth (Ret.)

The Wrong Way To Defend America

In case you've forgotten, the bottom line as to why we have a standing military force will always come down to our soldiers' ability to put a slug between the enemy's eyes.

But lately, elite Army Green Berets tell me they're not getting enough range time. And range time is what allows these trigger-pullers to sharpen their skills so they can do their deadly job: Kill people when they threaten our country or national interests.

Across the board, these dedicated men say they're actually not being given the money to buy enough bullets! Nor do they have sufficient Pentagon-provided funds to train tough or even get the mission-essential gear they need to win battles.

If this special unit — which normally gets priority over all other fighting outfits — isn't getting the right stuff, then what about the ordinary grunt airmen, sailors, soldiers and Marines who do the sustained hard duty at the point of the spear?

If the dough isn't going to the troops who do the fighting and dying, where does the \$300 billion go that you and I give to the Pentagon each year?

Even a recruit knows a lot of defense dollars get blown on wonder weapons that are more wonder than weapon. Flops like the Marine's Osprey helicopter and the Air Force's latest blooper, the anti-ICBM missile — which is supposed to be the brightest star of Star Wars II, but so far can't even manage a twinkle.

Besides these gold-plated monuments to greed and stupidity — not to mention all the other military-industrial complex rip-offs — there are scores of redundant World War II bases burning up dollars faster than a room full of cocaine addicts. And Congress won't be closing them anytime soon because bases mean jobs and perks for the voters back home.

Or take the recent Independence Day extravaganza courtesy of Bill Clinton and his SecDef, Bill Cohen. You know, the made-for-TV celebration where 24 U.S. naval vessels — manned by thousands of impressed sailors and Marines — became the stage and props for the folks around New York harbor, scores of rich Clinton and Cohen pals and the TV viewers of the world.

The cost of the event, besides further lowering morale by taking already overcommitted sailors away from their families on a major holiday, was so many millions of bucks — sorely needed for bullets, training and gear for our sharpshooters — that the Pentagon's still counting.



Col. David Hackworth (Ret.) also writes a syndicated weekly column titled "Defending America." "Hack" doesn't pull any punches and many liberal rags won't carry his writing. If your local paper falls into that category, call the editor and let him know you'd like to see "Defending America" on the Op-Ed page. It's syndicated by King Features, 235 E. 45th St., New York, NY 10017.

After Clinton exited the taxpayer-funded bash aboard the aircraft carrier *U.S.S. John F. Kennedy*, Cohen, his wife and the Dot Com-era robber barons partied on.

Perfumed prince Cohen, a big-spender of Pentagon dollars for things that have little or nothing to do with defense, stayed on and used the *JFK* as if it were his own personal royal yacht. His rationale for the VIP party was that it would be a good way to show-off the military to important community leaders and get their support and involvement.

But just a minute! Why is a Washington jewelry designer — now apparently a Cohen-proclaimed important community leader — rewarded with this kind of perk along with dozens of other irrelevant swells when around the world undertrained G.I.s are over-committed trying to do too much with too little?

Can't Cohen see that this sort of sorry example won't exactly have the effect he claims he wants to achieve? Doesn't he comprehend that none of his power guests rushed home and encouraged their kids to "Go Navy" or dashed down to the local recruiter, volunteering to use their influence, time and money to help fill a hollow armed forces?

And does he really think he won any hearts and minds among the sailors, who

had to bust their butts to clean, cook, serve and polish the ship so some strap-hangers could say how cool a Fourth of July they had?

And what about the sailors' spouses going it alone in Norfolk, Va., with the kids, while their mates were forced into serving as waiters and bellhops for the VIPs?

Come January, Clinton and Cohen will be gone. Thousands of fine warriors tell me they can't wait until they hear that *flush*. Hopefully then our new president will return America's armed forces to the role our founding fathers envisioned: DEFENDING AMERICA.

<http://www.hackworth.com> is the address of David Hackworth's home page.

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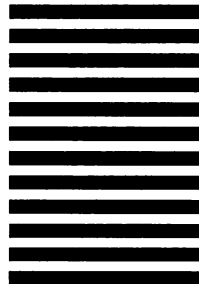
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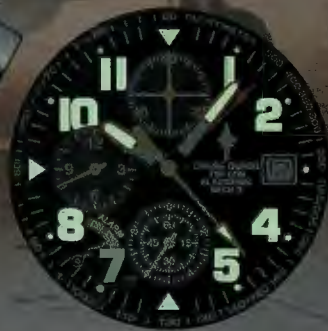


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